The Doll

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/1262182.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Abigail Hobbs, Winston, Garrett Jacob Hobbs
Additional Tags:	Prequel, Doll!Hannibal, Mini!Hannibal, Hannibal has another card up his sleeve, Not really a secret what he is if you read the doll house, but you don't have to, Angst, Hurt/Comfort, Humor, I don't think Hannibal likes it Abigail, Possessive Behavior, Protectiveness, Sleepwalking, Cuddling & Snuggling, Depression, Suicidal Thoughts, Hobbs and Abigail are not related
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of The Living Doll
Stats:	Published: 2014-03-03 Completed: 2014-05-30 Words: 25,845 Chapters: 9/9

The Doll

by Anna_Jay

Summary

Prequel to The Doll House:
Will is aware of what he's getting himself into when he buys the dreaded Doll House. Because of the cursed doll, no one has been able to stay longer than a month. He doesn't mind. Perhaps death would be kind after everything he's been through. Over the next few days Will finds himself attached to the strange doll he's named Hannibal.
After all, it is just a doll. Right?

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Chapter Summary

Emerald.7.Eyes.7's Polish translation of "The Doll"
https://www.fanfiction.net/s/11541362/1/Lalka. Go check it out!

Will stood outside of the house while the realtor talked in the background. The woman, along with many others from the town, tried to talk him out of buying the house. They called it the “Doll House” because there was a cursed doll attached to the lot. The townsfolk went on about the previous tenants and how almost all of them ended up dead or severely injured. Will ignored them. If anything the thought of being killed by the end of the month sounded promising after everything's he's been through.

Will shook his head. No, he wouldn't think about that now. That was in the past. This was the present. He followed the realtor inside the gate, making note to try and fix some of the fencing and siding on the house before heading inside.

The conditions were worse than on the outside. Every room was littered in dust. The kitchen held no appliances, there were no cupboards, tables, or ay sort of furniture. The living room was the same way with a torn brown carpet being the only item with color.

“Sorry for the mess.” The realtor apologized. “Usually we fix up the house, but after a while...”

“I understand,” Will promised. “You don't want to make it nice just for the tenant to die suddenly.”

Will walked around the living room with ideas floating around on how to fix up the place. If he lived long enough he would paint the walls a light forest green or maybe a pale blue. He wasn't sure about the flooring, but the carpet had to go. The woman lead him upstairs to where the master bedroom and two other guest rooms were place. She quickly passed by the first room, not saying anything about the ornate door or what was in it. Will didn't ask, figuring it was a guest room just like the others. He would take a look once he bought the house.

“Is there an attic?” he asked, but the woman shook her head.

“Surprisingly, no. And there isn't a basement, either. Just the first and second floor.”

Will nodded as he explored the bedrooms and paused by the ornate door, watching as the realtor stiffened. He continued on and went back down stairs.

“It is in that room, isn't it?” Will asked and the woman reluctantly nodded.

“Sorry, I just... can't look at it.”

“Is it horrifying?”

“Well... no.” She chuckled. “Actually I've never seen it myself, but I was told it is beautiful. But...” She trailed off, glancing up the stairs before giving an uneasy smile.

They moved to the kitchen and talked about the state of the house. The plumbing was in great shape, the walls and floorboards near perfect. The only things the house needed fixing were a few home improvements. The realtor got out a few papers and Will signed all of them. After putting them back in her folder, she held her hand out and shook Will's hand.

“Thank-you, Mr. Graham. The Doll House is all yours.”

–

Will didn't move in right away. He had been staying at the hotel while he worked out the lease for the Doll House. He stayed at the hotel another night before beginning to move his stuff. He didn't own much, just a couple boxes of personal belongings. The lack of furniture wasn't too much of a problem; he didn't expect anyone to visit him anytime soon. However, he would have to purchase a bed. For now the floor would do. As soon as all his boxes were piled into the master bedroom he set out to work.

It was close to two o' clock when his cellphone rang. Will wiped his hands on his pants to remove any access paint before picking it up. He smiled when he saw the caller ID.

“Hey, Abigail, how are you?”

“Don't 'hey, Abigail' me!” the voice on the other line snapped. “You were supposed to call me yesterday.”

“Why didn't you call to check on me?” Will asked as he cradled the phone against his shoulder so he could wash his hands.

“Because I was thinking I had a kind older brother who would keep his promises.” Abigail replied, and Will laughed.

“Okay, okay, I'm sorry, Abby. I'll make it up to you.” He apologized. Abigail huffed on the other line, but Will knew there was a smile on her face.

“So, how is it?”

“I gotta tell you it is rough.” Will admitted as he looked around the kitchen. It was a good thing there weren't cupboards or any other fixture because it would have been covered in blue paint. He wasn't worried about the floor; he would take the tile out later. “But by the end of the week it'll be good as new.”

“You should totally take before and after pictures.” his sister prompted. “And send them to me so I can criticize them.”

“What's that supposed to mean?”

“Will, you have terrible taste.”

“I do not!” Will heard his sister scoff and he rolled his eyes. “Just because my fashion sense doesn't match whatever's the newest thing doesn't mean I have bad taste.”

“Uh-huh. Sure.” Abigail said flatly. “Just send pics when you're done.”

“Fine.”

Abigail giggled at his tone, and Will couldn't help but smile.

“So how are things going? For real this time.”

Will was quiet as he inspected the drying paint. It was too dark. Maybe he should add more white.

“It's going... Well.” He admitted. “As well as someone in my situation might be.”

“Will...”

“I'm fine, Abby. I just... I'll adjust. Trust me.”

Abigail was silent for a long time. Finally, she asked, “What happens if you don't?”

“...I don't know.” He said softly.

The siblings didn't say anything for a long while, each stuck in their own minds. Abigail was the first to break it by asking, “Have you seen it yet?”

Will blinked. “Seen what?”

He could practically hear her roll her eyes. “The *doll*, silly.”

Will paused. He had almost forgotten about it. “I haven't actually gotten around to looking for it yet.” He replied as he stepped into the living room. He looked up the stairs, catching a glimpse of the corner of the ornate door.

“Well you should find it and take a pic for me.”

Will groaned. “I swear you and your dolls--”

“They're not just dolls, Will. They are ball-jointed dolls.”

“They still have the word 'doll' in the title, so I think I win this one.” Will replied with a shake of his head. He couldn't understand his sister's love for the dolls. She had a few of them, and from what Will could tell they were a waste of money. Some of them cost well into

the hundred ranges, not including the clothes and wigs and God knows what other accessories.

“Just send a pic when you find it.” Abigail said impatiently, and Will sighed.

“Fine, fine. I got to finish painting the kitchen. Talk to you later.”

Will went back to the kitchen and grabbed the paint roller, but he couldn't focus on what he was doing. As he painted, his mind kept wandering away to the ornate room and what was inside.

–

By seven o' clock the kitchen was completely painted while the living room was still in progress. He ripped out the carpet because he didn't want to haul it covered in paint. That, and it was an eye sore. Will looked around at his accomplishments and nodded to himself. He should be done with the main rooms by Thursday; he would work on the master and guest bedrooms later. Calling it a night, Will trudged upstairs, paused in front of the ornate door, before going to take a shower.

He toweled his hair as he dug around in his mini fridge for the sandwich he had bought at the gas station earlier that day, and he stuck it in the microwave. He had set up the only appliances he owned in his room because he didn't want them in the way when he painted. He sat on the floor and allowed the towel to pool around his shoulders.

His body ached all over, but it was a good pain. It helped take his mind off of his own thoughts. It had been a long time since he had worked that hard. He sighed as he watched his food go around in circles. Yes, it had been a long time.

The microwave beeped at him and he took out his meal. It wouldn't fill him up completely, but it would do for now. He would go into town tomorrow and get anything that would fit in his mini fridge. Maybe some bread, sandwich meat, eggs. He could microwave scrambled eggs in a bowl. Granted, he would have to buy a bowl...

Finishing his meal Will opened a box labeled “bedroom” and pulled out a couple of blankets and a pillow. He didn't have any bedding or even a blowup mattress, but he didn't mind. He had slept on hardwood floors before.

He was arranging his 'bed' when the house began to creak. He didn't pay it any mind. It was just an old house settling. He started to mind the creaking when it sounded suspiciously like footsteps coming close to his bedroom.

Will watched his closed door. He was sure he locked the doors and windows downstairs, and he doubted anyone in town would try and break in. He wasn't scared, but he still cautiously cracked the door open and peeked outside.

There was nothing. Will opened the door wider and looked both ways. Still nothing.

He let out a sigh and ran his fingers through is hair. He was just tired. It had been a long day, and an even longer couple months. Giving another sigh he turned to go back into his room when he noticed something odd.

The ornate door was slightly open.

Will paused, suddenly on guard. Maybe there was someone in the house. Not wasting any time, Will went back into his room and grabbed his gun. He took the safety off and slowly made his way to the opened door and turned on the lights.

The room was filled with furniture. Will searched the room thoroughly, but there was no one. Not taking any chances, Will searched all of the rooms and double checked the locks. Everything was in order and there was no one in the house. He made his way back to the ornate room, standing in the center.

He entertained the idea of someone already being *in* the house and just left, but Will didn't think that was likely. No one would be able to sit or lay in one spot for hours. They would have moved around at some point, and Will would have heard the footsteps.

He relaxed and turned the safety back on before putting the gun on the nearest table and took another look around him. Will found a number of tables, a couch, pillows, and a sofa chair all collecting dust in the small room. They were covered with sheets, so they weren't in terrible condition, but there was still a thick layer of dust coating what was once white cloth.

Will carefully uncovered the couch first, figuring he could sleep on it until he got a bed. He gathered the sheet and put it in the bathroom. He contemplated pushing it to the bedroom but he decided to leave it. It would only be going downstairs later. Might as well keep it in one spot.

He was about to go and gather his blankets and pillow when he saw something funny about the still covered sofa chair. He took the sheet off, and he nearly dropped it in surprise.

Sitting crookedly in the chair was a doll. Will slowly set the sheet down on the floor before taking a closer look.

It was just like the dolls Abigail owned. The jointed limbs made it so the doll stayed in its awkward place, looking like it was sitting upright when in fact it was laying on its side. It was also naked. Will dared to reach out and pick it up, gently unbending the legs and arms so everything was straight. Will guessed the doll was about over a foot tall, maybe 14 inches, but he wouldn't know for sure until he measured it.

He wasn't used to seeing the ball-jointed dolls without clothes and was a little surprised to find it was anatomically correct and not like a barbie doll. It was a male model with a masculine face and figure. Will tried to think back if his sister owned any male dolls. They all looked the same, ranging from feminine to androgynous. Where the eyes were usually big and expressive, this one had smaller, narrower eyes which made him look even more realistic. Also, while Abigail's dolls were young looking, this one had lines painted on his face making him look older and more distinguished. It was unusual to see, but Will thought it was clever. Can't have all young dolls.

The doll's brown eyes stared blankly up at Will as he examined him. Will stroked a finger over ash colored hair, smoothing the unruly parts down. Will continued to admire the doll before smiling.

“So, you're the cursed doll, hm?” he asked. “You look pretty normal to me, though it is strange you don't have any clothes.”

Will set the doll back on the sofa chair before looking around once more. He had seen some boxes underneath a few tables and opened them up. There must be doll clothes somewhere.

Coming up empty handed, Will stood quietly before turning to the door. “I'll be right back.” he excused himself. When he returned he held a pair of scissors and a small sewing kit.

“My sister owns a bunch of dolls like you,” he began, grabbing the doll and setting him on the table. “I used to fix their clothes from time to time. Usually small stuff like rips or buttons falling off. I stopped doing it once my sister got the hang of sewing, so I might be a little rusty.”

He took a corner of the dusty sheet and cut a large portion out of it. He dusted it off and laid it out before eyeing the doll and making appropriate cuts. Soon Will had a long smock like night gown with long sleeves. He put the makeshift outfit onto the doll and nodded at his handy work.

“Nothing fancy, but it is better than having to stare at your nakedness.” Will laughed, gently bobbing the doll on the nose. He paused, realization of what he had done.

I'm talking to a doll. He thought. *A doll that everyone tells me is cursed and will end up killing me in a month, and I just made it a dress to wear and poked it.*

Will pinched the bridge of his nose and rubbed his eyes. He must be tired, he rationalized. By tomorrow he probably will avoid this room. No need to look at or interact with the doll. He put the doll back on the sofa chair and continued to bring his blankets to the room. He set the bed up on the couch, glancing at the doll every once in awhile. It was positioned away, but it still looked strange. He was tempted to move it out of his room, but he mentally scolded himself. It was just a doll.

Will remembered how Abigail would arrange her dolls, putting the in pajamas and small beds. It almost didn't feel right have the cursed doll without one. Will sighed as he ran a hand over his face again, wondering if he was going crazy. He came to a decision and soon he had made a pillow out of a washcloth and used a clean towel for a blanket. It wasn't fancy, but it would do.

“Hope this means you won't kill me in my sleep, right?” Will joked as he tucked the towel under the doll's chin. The doll just stared blankly up at the ceiling. Will considered that a good enough sign before turning in for the night.

–

Will let out a choked yelp as he sat up, his breathing harsh. He looked around in panic, unable to see anything in the dark. He stumbled from his bed and collided with the wall, feeling franticly for the light switch. As soon as he found it and the room was bathed in light, Will stood and got a baring on his surroundings. Slowly, he remembered he was in his new house, he was sleeping on a couch because he didn't have a bed, and his roommate was a supposedly cursed doll.

Will fell against the wall, sliding down to the floor. He closed his eyes, fragments of his dream already starting to fade. But he knew it wouldn't fully go away. It was hard to forget nightmares when they were recollections of the past. He shuddered and put his head in his hands. He was alright. He had to look forward. What happened cannot be changed.

He took another gulp before standing on shaky legs. His shirt was soaked in sweat and simply changing into clean one would not do. He stumbled out of the doll's room and made his way to the bathroom, trying to focus on what he needed to do for the coming day. His mind, however, continued to wander away. Sleep was also out of the question. Even as a kid he could never fall asleep after a bad dream. In the end he found himself back on the couch staring at nothing. He had switched the light back off with the moonlight sneaking in through the window.

Will wasn't sure how long he laid there in the dark. He made lists in his head, but he knew he would forget them. He always did. He found himself looking at the ceiling when he suddenly was overcome by fatigue. Will yawned and closed his eyes briefly. Maybe, maybe he could fall back to sleep. An image of his dream flashed in his mind and he shook his head, forcing his eyes open. However, he ended up yawning again, and again, and again. A faint humming began to chase the quiet away and Will found his eyes once again lulled closed. It was an odd sound. He hadn't heard it before when he was in the house. The room also felt warmer than usual, and Will guessed it was the furnace starting to kick in after the drop in temperature.

Yawning, Will allowed himself to relax into the couch, his face pressed into the cushions. He sighed as his body relaxed in the warm room, the humming filling his ears as he fell asleep.

Not a single bad dream visited him the remainder of the night.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

Thank-you for all of your lovely comments. Reading them has brought me to a couple conclusions.
A) We are all on the same wave length with where the plot is going.
B) I'm a predictable writer
Look forward to later chapters. Your questions will all be answered.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“I guess I should name you, huh?” Will asked as he sipped his coffee. He had finished fixing up the kitchen and moved one of the tables down from the doll's room. He set up the microwave on the counter and set the mini fridge underneath. The room was still empty, but it was slowly filling. He now had a table and chair to sit and entertain guests. If he had any. Ever. The doll sat on the table opposite of him, looking uncomprehendingly ahead, which could have been a yes or a no.

Will rested his chin on his hand as he inspected the doll. He had attempted at making a shirt and pants so the doll didn't have to be in the night gown, but they looked terrible. As soon as Will got his internet set up he would buy some clothes. Might as well have a small set for the next resident to dress the doll in after Will was gone.

Blinking down at the ruggedly dressed doll, Will began to list names.

“Henry,” he said.

It didn't sound right.

“George.”

Nope, that wasn't right either.

“Alphonse?” he tried.

Closer, but still not right.

Will tapped his his fingers against his chin as he rattled off names, but none of them were working. He scowled, racking his brain for names that would work. The doll stared back.

“... I'll think on it some more.” Will finalized as he stood from the table and put his plate in the sink. He picked the doll up and carried him with him to the living room and set him down on the couch. It was interesting event getting the couch downstairs, but he didn't do it by

himself. He had a mattress shipped to him and he asked the men bringing it to his room if they could also help move the couch. He paid them a little extra for their trouble.

With the newly painted light olive walls and hardwood floors Will felt the house was one step closer to being a home.

“Did no one try and fix up the house when they lived here?” He asked offhandedly, picking up a stud finder and nails. “How many people lived here before me? The realtor didn't get into details. Just that no one's been able to last a month.”

Will marked off where he needed to put nails and took a step back. There was a small art shop in town, and many of the paintings had caught his eye. Especially the ones with sailboats. It didn't matter that he might die by the end of the month; it would give the struggling shop some business.

He made a few more marks when his phone began to play the theme song to *Phantom of the Opera.* He dug into his pocket and pulled it out, not stopping what he was doing.

“Hey, Abigail.” He greeted, making more marks as he went. “Did you like the pictures?”

“The house looks so nice!” Abigail gushed. “It looks so peaceful and the forest is so *green* . Why didn't you tell me the house you bought was out in the country?”

“I didn't think it would matter.” Will responded. He set his tools down and sat next to the doll on the couch. He switched ears as he asked, “How's school going? Any classes you like?”

There was a sigh. “Not really. Just taking a bunch of Generals now. I don't know what I want to do with my life.”

“Just do what you like to do. I'm sure you can find something that interests you.”

“Yeah, maybe.” Abigail trailed off, but she suddenly came to attention. “Did you ever take a pic of the doll?”

Will looked down at his “roommate” in his shabby clothes. “Not yet. Maybe later.”

“Just do it now. I'll hang up so you can take them. I will call back if you don't in ten minutes.”

“You know I can just turn my phone on silent and ignore you.” Will shot back, but he was already standing with the doll in one arm.

“You wouldn't dare.” she said knowingly. “Talk to you in a little bit.”

Will grumbled as he set the doll on the table and turned on the camera setting. He positioned the doll so he was straight and laying on his back. Will aimed and took a picture.

It was too fuzzy.

He tried again, but this time it was too dark to see anything. It was blurry again the third time.

Will looked down at his phone, puzzled. He wasn't the best at technology, but he knew how to work the camera setting on his flip phone. He looked down at the doll.

“Let's pretend you are really cursed and you're not letting me take a picture.” Will began, pulling up a chair. “If you let me take one, maybe two, nice pictures my sister will leave me alone about this. Also, she does own dolls similar to you. She can tell me what model you are and when I get my computer running we can buy clothes together. Do we have a deal?”

The doll didn't answer, and Will wondered what he would have done if he had. Will raised the phone one more time and snapped a picture.

It was near perfect. Will felt a trickle of worry begin to seep in, but he banished it. It was a coincidence. Pure and simple. He took another one of just the doll's head, knowing Abigail would be able to look up the model off the way the face was painted. He sent the pictures and smiled down at the doll. “Thank-you, Mr. Cursed doll with no name.”

Will paused and slapped a hand over his face. What was the matter with him? He was talking to a doll. A *doll* . Either he was going slowly insane or he was turning into his sister. Neither were good options.

To get over his embarrassment he texted Abigail and asked her to find out what type of doll he was. Shutting his phone, Will went back into the living room, the doll in tow.

He was about to get back to work when he realized songs from the *Phantom of the Opera* were now stuck in his head. Will groaned, but he started to work. He hummed a few songs he knew, having only seen the movie once and listening to Abigail blast the soundtrack every time he visited her in the dorms. It didn't help when the 25 th Anniversary DVD came out.

Still humming, Will started to put nails in their places. After a few minutes Will stopped before going upstairs and bringing his laptop down. He had the songs stuck in his head, and Abigail put them all on his laptop. Might as well listen to the music while he was at it.

He had the songs on random, but he didn't mind. It was just background music. That, and it made him think of home. He sighed as he fell into his work, beginning to hang the numerous oceanic paintings around the living room. He examined his handy work, rearranged, and examined again. He was humming along with the music, one of the opening songs, wasn't it? He tuned in as it got around to the chorus, the small speakers on his laptop playing as loud as they could.

The trumpeting elephants sound/ hear, Romans, now and tremble!/Hark to their step on the ground/hear the drums!/Hannibal comes!

Will paused. Hannibal, the war general who nearly conquered Rome during the Punic Wars. Wasn't that what the song was about? Will listened as the song reached a crescendo and sneaked a look at the doll that was still slumped against the couch cushions.

“...Hannibal.” Will said, testing the word on his lips. “I like it. What do you think?” He reached over and picked up the doll. Will gave him a look over before smiling. “I think it's a great name.”

The doll, Hannibal, didn't reply.

–

Will set his laptop up on the table with Hannibal sitting next to him. Abigail had sent Will information on the model Hannibal most resembled, and Will was finally able to check out the website she gave him. It was slow, but Will didn't mind. He wouldn't be using it much.

The first things Will saw when the page loaded were dolls that looked similar to Hannibal, but with different types of hair and sizes. Will scrolled down to where it said “clothes” and began his search.

He didn't like any of them. They were too frilly, or too lacy, or just didn't seem to fit the type of personality Will imagined Hannibal having. He continued to scroll, making comments on some of the items as he went. He managed to find a section that seemed to be “normal” and tried to select a few. Amongst the list was a Hawaiian shirt and cargo shorts, and Will snorted. The image of Hannibal, a cursed doll, wearing such an outfit gave him the giggles. He glanced over at the doll, and from the way he was positioned he looked like he was frowning.

“Joking, I'm just joking. I wouldn't actually buy that. Too... Touristy.” Will continued to entertain the thought as he backspaced and went on through the list again. About halfway down he found just the outfit.

It was a dark blue suit that came with a cream colored tie and socks, and blue shoes. Will nodded to himself.

“I think this will work perfectly, don't you, Hannibal?” he asked. He didn't know why he asked the doll questions. He knew he wasn't going to answer back.

Will found similar outfits in different colors and bought four of them, his total coming to about a hundred and sixty dollars. He gritted his teeth and nearly removed two of the outfits when he sighed.

“Not like I'm going to use the money on myself...” He mumbled and send in his order. It gave an estimate of three days, four if there were any problems with the shipping process, and Will marked the day the package would arrive at the post office.

When Will fitted Hannibal in the dark blue and cream suit the following days he had to admit the doll looked very hansom.

–

It was late one Saturday evening, about a week and a half since he moved in, and Will was coming back from the lake. It wasn't too far from his home, about half a mile. He had gone fishing and was bringing his prizes back. He had recently bought a grill and with the weather being so nice he thought he could cook up some walleye. He had also purchased a bigger fridge and freezer to store his meager meals and fish.

It had been a good trip to the lake. The weather was perfect: just enough sun and cloud ratio, wind was just a little breeze, and the fish were all biting. He had been out all day, leaving Hannibal in his room. He didn't want to try and take the doll with him. If some of the stories were true, then he probably wouldn't have made it to the lake that day. He would have been, to quote some of the townsfolk, “compelled to take the doll back to the house”. He didn't believe in the superstition, but better to be safe than sorry.

He was getting close to the house when a small whimper caught his attention. Stopping in his tracks, Will looked in the direction of the noise. He lifted his flashlight and caught reflective eyes in the darkness. He jumped a little at the unexpected sight, but calmed when he saw it was a dog. The poor creature whined again, cautiously moving closer to Will. Will lowered his flashlight so it wasn't shining directly in the animal's face and took in his appearance.

The dog was severely malnourished and caked in mud. Will noted the limp as he came closer, head lowered and body shaking. Will didn't go near the dog, letting him come to him at his own pace. He held out a hand slowly, and the dog sniffed. It must have smelt like fish for he started to lick his hand. Will slowly retracted his hand and reached into his lunch box, pulling out his leftover sandwich. Piece by piece he fed it to the dog, urging him to follow him as he made his way back to the house. Instead of going inside, Will helped the dog into his car and took him to the vet. He was worried about his leg.

Nearly an hour and a half later Will returned with a clean and deemed healthy dog. The mutt, Winston Will decided, followed him into the house, his bandaged leg not slowing him down. He had been fed at the vet and given special food to help him recover. Will put a bowl out for him, but he wasn't hungry. Will stroked the dog's head before yawning. It was getting late. He started to get ready for bed, Winston never too far from his heels.

Will was brushing his teeth when he heard Winston growl. He came out to investigate and found the dog standing in his room, the fur on his back raised as he stared down the doll on his bed. Will paused. He thought he put Hannibal in his room. He went to pick him up when Winston barked sharply, his ears laid back and his teeth showing.

“Winston, it's okay, boy. It's okay.” Will assured as he stroked the dog's head. The dog kept his gaze fixed on the doll, and Hannibal stared back. Will stood by, looking back and forth between the dog and the doll. He was about to snatch Hannibal from the bed when Winston suddenly relaxed. His tongue flopped out and he gave a big yawn. Will watched as Winston made himself a bed on the rug near Will's bed, twirling three times before falling asleep. Will glanced back at Hannibal, but the doll was still.

Will didn't believe in supernatural creatures or curses, but there was something about this doll. He picked out the pajamas he bought for Hannibal and began to change him.

“... If you are cursed, Hannibal, please don't hurt Winston. He's just a dog; he doesn't know better.”

He finished up with the pajamas and carried Hannibal to his room. Against his better judgment, Will had bought a small bed big enough to house Hannibal. He decided to have

Hannibal “sleep” in this room instead of Will's because it was the room he found him in. He thought perhaps the doll would rather be in this room than the master bedroom.

Tucking Hannibal in his bed, Will gently bopped him on the nose. It had become a habit since the first night. He tried to stop, but he could never catch himself in time.

“Have a good night, Hannibal. See you in the morning.”

The doll didn't reply.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter is going to be hilarity and feels. Just so you know.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will's sleep went back and forth between being gentle dreams to overpowering nightmares. The first night in the Doll House was terrible, but he had managed to fall back to sleep. Something he had been unable to do in the past. Since then his nights were only interrupted by his bad dreams only a couple of times. When he did wake gasping for air and soaking in sweat, he would go take a shower, go downstairs for a drink before returning to his room. He would check on Hannibal as he made the return trip, peeking in and seeing the doll was still nestled in his bed. In the back of his mind Will wondered what he would do if the doll wasn't there.

After checking to make sure both Hannibal and Winston were okay, Will would crawl back into bed and stare up at the ceiling. As usual, he was unable to fall asleep for about an hour until he heard the humming of the furnace kicking in, warming the room and making him drowsy. His eyes would start to droop and the humming continued and in minutes he was fast asleep. That's what the routine for if he had nightmares had been for the past two weeks. It was only a matter of time before it changed.

Will was prone to sleepwalking, but thankfully he had yet to do so since he moved in. He figured it was from all the stress and the change in location that kept him rooted in his bed. Whatever it was, he was thankful for it.

He crawled into bed and watched as Winston curled on his rug. Will smiled and curled up under the covers before reaching over and turning out the light.

–

Will was standing outside of a blue house. It was one story, by the looks of it with all the lights out. He knew better though, he knew there was someone inside. He readied his gun as his partner got into position. Together they entered the house just ahead of the other officers.

They called out the resident's name, searching all over for her. There was no sign of her on the main floor. Will decided to check the basement.

The dream shifted, and instead of going to the basement it lead to a forest. Will didn't stop to think. He continued on, calling out the girl's name, oblivious to the door shutting and disappearing into the forestry.

"Cassie!" *Will shouted.* "Cassie, can you hear me?"

Will ran along dirt paths, ducking and avoiding branches as the wind began to pick up. He lifted his flashlight higher, trying to spot something, anything. When he turned he found another door. He reached out and tried to open it, but it wouldn't open.

Will tried again, but he got the same results. He dropped both his gun and his flashlight as he struggled to open the door. He was about to ram his shoulder against it when a voice called out to him.

"What are you doing, William?" *the voice asked. Will ignored it, once again trying to turn the knob. Maybe if he shot off the lock.*

"What are you doing, William?" *the voice asked again, this time it was closer. A weight settled on his right shoulder and he turned his head, but there was no one there.*

"I-I have to find her." *He said, turning around completely to find the speaker, but the forest was too dark. He couldn't even find his flashlight or gun.*

"Who?" *the voice inquired, small puffs of breath hitting his right ear.*

"Cassie, Cassie Boyle. She's missing. I have to find her." *Will said with urgency.*

The voice made a small hum before replying. "But, William, Cassie is safe."

"No, no she's not!" *Will argued, but the voice shushed him.*

"Yes, she it. She's sleeping in her bed, see?"

Will turned just as a bed appeared with a young woman resting in the blankets. Will slowly approached the bed and reached a hand down to check her breathing.

"See?" *replied the voice.* "She's fine, William. Come, let's go back to bed."

Will suddenly felt tired, his bones weary as he entered through another door leading upstairs. He would have continued walking when the voice stopped him.

"Aren't you forgetting something?"

Another door appeared at his right and opened on its own, revealing Hannibal sleeping in his little bed.

"Oh, right."

The weight left his shoulder but Will didn't notice. He walked over to Hannibal and gently picked him up. He then continued on his way towards a bed floating in the middle of the darkness. He pulled the covers over his body and cradled Hannibal to his chest. He shut his eyes as he felt something brush against his unshaven cheek.

–

Will remembered his dream, but he hoped it hadn't happened. But the evidence was laying in his lab, looking blankly at the ceiling. Will ran his hand through his hair as he tried to process what he did in his sleep.

"I... Cuddled... With Hannibal." Will said slowly. "I cuddled with the cursed doll."

Will rubbed his eyes and tried to process what was going on. Why would his subconscious want him to take the doll and bring it back to bed with him? It didn't make sense. He never cuddled with stuffed animals as a kid, even though he had a handful of them growing up. He would rather hug pillows or bunch up his blankets to pretend it was another person as an adult, but now...

Will groaned and flopped back in bed. Winston gave a small whine and licked his hand, and Will reached out and stroked his head. After a few moments he got out of bed, changed Hannibal into a new suit, and lead the way downstairs.

After feeding Winston and letting him outside to play in the yard, Will began to make food for himself. He waited for the stove top to warm up as he sipped his coffee, glancing at Hannibal from his perch at the edge of the table.

"...I promise this won't happen again, Hannibal." He said to the doll. "I'm surprised I didn't sweat all over you in my sleep. Or crush you." Will took another sip before shaking his head. "But it won't happen again. I promise not to spirit you away from your bed."

Will should have known better than to make such promises. Over the next two nights he found himself awoken with Hannibal in his arms. He wasn't covered in sweat, so nightmares didn't make him crawl out of bed. Will thought about getting up and putting Hannibal back in his room, but the room was so warm and the furnace was running. It must only turn on during this time in the night, because he never heard it when he was awake. Only when he woke in the middle of the night.

Will relaxed back in his bed, peeking over and seeing Winston still sleeping next to the bed. He then rearranged Hannibal so he was next to him. He didn't want to cuddle with him, but he knew he might do it in his sleep. Will sighed and shook his head.

"Sorry, I'm too tired." Will whispered, falling back to sleep immediately after.

The next morning Will found Hannibal back in his arms, his little face pressed against his neck. Will wasn't even surprised and began to prepare for the day. It was a special day, after all.

"Abigail is coming to visit." Will chatted excitedly as he tidied up the kitchen. More and more items filled the room, but it was still empty. At least Abby wouldn't make fun of him for the lack of material items.

Hannibal watched on from his perch on a shelf Will installed. He was hoping to get some indoor plants and put them there, the spot perfect for them to get sun. Will smiled up at the doll and scratched Winston's ears. He didn't care that neither of his roommates could answer back or hold a conversation. He told them about Abigail and what she was like, telling stories about their childhood.

When two o' clock rolled around Will was practically bouncing on his feet. He hadn't had this much energy in a long time. Then again, he hadn't had someone he really wanted to see come around in a long while. A quarter after the hour a car pulled up beside Will's old one and Will rushed to the door to help with anything Abigail brought with her.

“Will, it is so good to see you!” Abigail wrapped her arms around her brother's shoulders, and Will returned the embrace. It had been too long since he had seen Abby in person. Their relationship had been almost strictly phone and skype conversations after Will left for the police academy five years ago. He was so happy she was going to be staying for a few days.

“You sure you aren't missing school?” Will asked as he helped bring her stuff in. Abigail rolled her eyes and lightly punched him in the arm.

“For the last time, yes, Will.” she laughed. “I only have one class on Fridays and it was canceled.”

“How was the drive, by the way?” Will asked, leading her to the guest room next to his.

“Too long.” She sighed. She eyed the small twin size bed, and Will waved his hand.

“Go ahead and take a nap, Abby.” He said. “I'll start preparing supper.”

“At two thirty?” Abigail asked, but she was already sliding into the bed.

“I have a new recipe and it says prep time will take about three hours. Rest.”

Will heard some retort over the meal before he closed the door, seeing her already under the covers. He went downstairs and began pulling out ingredients for the meal.

–

After their meal the siblings sat in the living room drinking hot chocolate. Winston was sleeping near them, his quiet snores filling the background. Hannibal sat on a shelf of an old tv entertainment system Will found at a garage sale. The tv was missing, but it was filled with other nicknacks and plants. Abigail looked at Hannibal as she took a sip before smiling.

“He is handsome, isn't he?” She said.

Will nodded, smiling a little. “He's different from the ones you have. I never knew they made dolls like him.”

“He's pretty unique. The website I gave you for clothes says the dolls are no longer made, but the clothes are still produced since they are the same measurements for other style dolls.”

Will made a small sound in wonder. So Hannibal was a limited edition doll.

“It's a wonder the previous owners just left him here.” Abigail continued on. “I mean, he must have been expensive.”

Will shrugged as he took another drink. He had left out the part of Hannibal being cursed since he didn't want her to worry. He just told her the house came with a doll.

A jingle and the clicks of nails caught Will's attention as Winston got up from his spot. The dog stretched before shaking, looking at Will almost expectantly.

“Do you need to go outside?” Will asked, and the dog's ears perked even more. Abigail laughed at the sight and Will gave a mock sigh. “Fine, let's go outside.”

Winston rushed over to Will as he stood up and followed him closely to the door. Will let the dog slip out, and after a thought filled his outdoor water dish and put it out with him.

He was only gone for barely a minute when he returned to the living room, finding neither his sister nor Hannibal. Panic filled Will, remembering Hannibal was a cursed doll and Abigail was a stranger in the Doll House. He went to the stairs and called up, “What are you doing, Abby?”

A moment's pause before she replied. “....Nothing?”

Will relaxed momentarily, scolding himself for getting worried and climbed the stairs.

“Why are you up here and why did you take Hannibal with... you?” He trailed off as he entered the guest room, unsure of what to think of what he saw.

Abigail had a sheepish look on her face, but she didn't look too sorry for what she did. In her hands was Hannibal, but instead of his regular suit he now wore a dark blue Gothic style dress and perched on his head were black cat ears.

Will stared at the cursed doll and, before he could stop himself, laughed.

“Abby!” He said between intakes of breaths, trying to hold his laughter in. “What did you do?”

“I just wanted to see what it would look like.” She responded, looking at her handy work. “His model is too masculine, though.”

Will sucked in a deep breath and managed to compose himself. “Give him here before you put make up on him.”

“I wouldn't do that! If he's a rare doll then that might lower his status.”

Will paused. “...I'm not going to sell Hannibal.”

“Oh, I know, but if you ever wanted to enter a doll show then keeping him unpainted is the way to go. He's just so unique.” She stroked along one arm and rubbed his hand. “He is made out of something different than what mine are. And there aren't any seams where the mold would have been.” Abigail smoothed down Hannibal's hair around the cat band and smiled. “The ears are pretty cute though.”

Will shook his head and held out his hands. “Give him back.”

Abigail gave a dramatic sigh before handing Hannibal over. “Fine, but you can keep the dress if you want. Who knows, you might want to give Hannibal a girl friend.”

Will doubted Hannibal would want that, but he thanked her. He grabbed Hannibal's old outfit and headed to his room; Abigail went back downstairs to let Winston into the house. Will smiled down at the doll, who looked like he was scowling from the lighting in his room.

“She means well, but not all of her ideas are the best.” He chuckled as he removed the dress and opted to put him in a more casual outfit. He fitted the white button up and black slacks and put little slippers on his feet. He was about to grab the cat ears, but he paused. He took one more look before smiling.

“I must admit, you do look adorable with those on, Hannibal. I think you pull them off.”

And with that he gently removed the ears from his head and set them in his nightstand drawer with the other outfits. He smoothed Hannibal's hair down before returning to Abigail in the living room.

–

Will ran through the forest again, his flashlight waving madly around him. He was chasing down someone in the dark, but no matter how fast he ran the other ran faster. Will almost caught him when his foot caught on a raised root, causing him to fall onto the ground with his flashlight spiraling out of his hand. Will looked up as his suspect disappeared through a door, the area momentarily flashing with light before the door was slammed shut. Will scrambled to his feet and put all of his weight into breaking the door down. He fell once again, but this time in the sunlight.

The forest left him in favor of tall grass and golden wheat. Will panted as he searched for his suspect, but he couldn't see anything beyond the vegetation. The wind gently blew against his face and the rustle of wheat was the only thing he could hear. He took a few tentative steps, trying to see a path in the grass when a scream pierced through the air. He took off again, calling out to the person, but no one responded. It was quiet now. He pushed through the grass as fast as he could, and soon the grass cleared.

Will stopped dead in his tracks. There was blood everywhere, staining the golden wheat red. The figure in the middle was strung up, impaled over and over, her eyes staring at nothing. Will tried to step forward, but he couldn't make his legs move. All he could do was stare at the body of a young woman no older than Abigail as her blood ran down her body.

Will was so focused on the body he didn't hear the footsteps coming closer to him. It was too late for him to do anything as he was grabbed and pulled back into the field, his vision going black as he fell into a doorway. The hands held him down as voices began to rise, all of them becoming more and more angry.

“It's your fault she's dead!”

“Why couldn't you save my baby?”

“Why weren't you there in time?”

“Where were you?”

“It's your fault my sister is dead.”

“You are a murderer.”

“A murderer.”

“A murderer!”

“Will!”

–

Will gasped and violently shook off the hand on his shoulder. He was wrapped tightly in his sheets, sweat pouring from his skin. He struggled to breathe as he tried to escape from the confines of his bed, barely hearing Abigail next to him.

“Will, you are having a bad dream I need you to wake up, okay?” Abigail tried to reason, but Will's mind was still surrounded by his dream. No. Not dream. Memory.

Will sobbed and tried to hold it together, but the tears came anyway. He pulled into himself, not caring he was still tangled in his blankets or what Abigail must be thinking. He... He just couldn't do it right now.

Will found his hands grabbed and pulled. Will let out a startled cry, but he found himself with an armful of something small. He blinked his eyes enough to see he was clutching Hannibal. Weight settled on the bed and Abigail wrapped her arms around him.

“Hey, it's going to be okay, Will.” She reassured him.

Will let out another sob, grabbing both her and Hannibal closer. “I couldn't save her.”

“I know, but you tried so hard, Will. I'm so proud to have an older brother like you.” Abigail whispered, kissing him on his forehead.

“I couldn't do it... I just couldn't do it...” Will choked and buried his head against Abigail's neck. The position made him squish Hannibal's closer, but he didn't care. The doll could smite him now and he wouldn't bat an eye. Hell, he would welcome death if it took him away from this misery.

Abigail squeezed him and Will made himself relax. He felt another dip in the bed and he opened his eyes enough to find Winston curled on his legs, his brown eyes looking at Will with worry. Will managed to pull a hand free to pet the dog, allowing him to lick before bring it back to hold Hannibal. The doll felt solid against his chest, like Will didn't have to worry about crushing or being too rough with him. Will just kept his eyes squeezed shut as he tried to forget.

He didn't hear it, but the furnace had turned on, the low hum consuming the room. Will was almost too hot in his little pile, but he didn't want to move. Abigail's arm was dead weight around his shoulders, and Will wondered if she was asleep. He almost opened his eyes to check and make sure she was okay, but something brushed against his face in a calming manner.

“Shh. It'll be alright, William.”

That voice. Will recognized it. But he couldn't dwell on it as his body relaxed almost against his will, and soon he tumbled into a world of dreamless sleep.

–

Abigail was gone when Will woke, the smell of food wafting in from downstairs. Will didn't get out, his mind numb over what happened last night. He didn't know how he was going to face his sister. She knew of his panic attacks and that they got worse as a police officer, but she had never witnessed them. Will knew her perception of him would be altered. He just knew it.

He shifted on the bed and felt a weight on his chest. There, clutching to his dirty shirt was Hannibal. The doll's slightly curled hands had gotten caught in the fabric. Will slowly sat up and untangled them and brought the doll to eye level.

“...”

Will blinked down at the doll before leaning down and kissing him on the head.

“...Thanks, for not killing me, Hannibal. I... both appreciate it and hate you for it.”

The doll didn't say anything, not that he could. He was just a doll, after all.

There was a knock at his door and Abigail came in with two plates of food.

“Hey,” She greeted, waiting for Will to move Hannibal to the side before handing him a plate of eggs.

“Hey,” Will greeted back. Abigail climbed into the bed with her plate and dragged her laptop with her.

“Want to watch cute animal videos on Youtube?” she asked, and Will saw she already had a couple videos loaded and ready. He gave her a small smile and leaned back against the headboard.

“That would be great.”

Chapter End Notes

Don't worry, Will. Things will get better. You'll see.
Also, thank you MMM for showing me this:
http://lilliamslasher.deviantart.com/art/Hannibal-Lecter-inspired-Art-Doll-Mads-Mikkelsen-430306595

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was three days before the end of the month and Will was still alive. He wasn't sure how he felt about it. Part of him was glad the stories about the cursed doll were false, but another part, a darker, depressed part wished the doll would hurry up and gut him. But Will knew better. There was no such thing as supernatural creatures and curses. All of the deaths of the previous owners was just a coincidence.

Will watered his plants and glanced at the clock, making sure he was still on time.

“I'm going into town for a few hours,” Will explained as he grabbed his grocery list and buttoned his sweater. It was still summer, but the wind had picked up, making it a little chilly. “I'll be back some time around four.”

He put Hannibal in his room and made sure Winston had plenty of water before taking off for town.

–

The owner of the marina greeted him with a big smile on his face and clapped him on the shoulder. Will tried not to wince at the contact.

“Still alive, I see,” the owner laughed and guided Will to the back room. Will nodded even though the owner couldn't see him, looking around the dusty room.

“Yeah, just three more days before the month is over.” Will said as he took a seat. The owner nodded and pulled out the file he had made when Will first applied for the job. Will met with all the criteria and impressed the man with his knowledge of boats and engines. He even fixed an engine that was seen as unsalvageable. Will was the best, but because he lived in the Doll House the owner was hesitant to hire him.

“I'll tell you what,” the owner had said during Will's first interview two weeks ago. “If you last the entire month then I'll hire you.”

Now, only three days away from the end of the month, Will felt confident that the house was not going to kill him. The owner seemed to think that too, for he began to set up a section for Will to work in when he started.

“Right now we are in our busy season and can use all the help we can get,” the owner said. “You'll be working with a couple other guys, but they shouldn't give you too much crap. They saw the engine you fixed, and, you didn't here this from me, but Carl has a crush on you now.” He continued giving Will the tour of the marina before they returned in the main room. “Alright, that should cover everything. Any questions?”

He took Will's hand and shook it. “I'll see you next Tuesday, Mr. Graham.”

Will thanked him and left the marina with a little more pep in his step. After months of dread, things were finally looking up.

–

Will was filing his groceries in his car when his phone began to buzz. Packing the last of his bags, he put the shopping cart in the rack before grabbing his phone.

“Hey, Abby, what--”

“Turn on your tv.”

Will paused. “I don't have a tv. I'm not even home right now.”

“Then turn on the radio or something.” Abigail urged him, and Will was beginning to worry.

“What's going on, Abigail.”

“It's... Did you say you weren't home?”

“Abi-”

“Go home and go to any major news website. You'll see what I mean.”

Will got back into his car and put his phone back into the safety of his pocket. His good mood was beginning to ebb away as worry began to gnaw at his stomach.

–

The first thing Will did when he got home was to grab his laptop and turn it on. He put the groceries away as fast as he could, moving over to the laptop to check its progress every few seconds. When it finally turned on he dropped everything to search for any breaking news. He couldn't sit still, moving his leg and scratching his hands every so often. Winston whined next to him, trying to wedge his nose under his elbow, but Will shook him off. He had to know what Abigail was talking about. What was so urgent?

When the front page of his chosen news website finally loaded, Will froze.

Breaking News: Garrett Jacob Hobbs Escapes from Prison.

Will sat in his chair, his breathing becoming uneven as he forced himself to scroll through the article.

Garrett Jacob Hobbs, also known as the Minnesota Shrike, has escaped from his cell in the Baltimore State Prison earlier this morning. Police are on the look out for this known serial killer, but so far there have been no leads. However, police believe he could be going after the police officer who captured him earlier this year. His name has been kept secret from the

public to protect him and his family, but there is evidence to prove Hobbs might go after this officer.

Will stopped reading and called Abigail back, shooting from his chair and pacing around his kitchen.

“Are you safe?” he asked as soon as she picked up. “Where are you right now?”

“Will, I'm fine--”

“No you're not! I'm coming to--”

“No! The world doesn't know I exist, so I'm fine, but he could be after you, Will. I'm scared.”

Will tried to reassure his sister, but the ache in his stomach wouldn't go away. “Have the police contacted you at all?”

“Yes, your old partner called me. He tried to get a hold of you, but....”

Will nodded. He had changed his phone number in attempts to hide from the outside world. Only Abigail knew it. “I'll check my e-mail to see if he tried to contact me. I'll tell him I want you under police protection--”

But she cut him off. “Will, don't you see? He's after you! He's after you.”

Will soothed and calmed her, but his own mind was racing. Until Hobbs was found no one would be safe.

–

The next two days were hell. Will called Abigail every hour to make sure she was okay. It was hard to do since she had class, but she would always get back to him as soon as she could. Will was an emotional wreak. He didn't eat, didn't sleep, and he barely moved from his place on the couch. He mechanically let Winston in and out and fed him, but Will didn't care for his own body. Soon, he began to lose time, one blink leading him from the couch to the bedroom, or from the bedroom to the bathroom. During one of his blinks he found himself in the kitchen, holding a knife against his throat. He dropped the knife and ran straight to the bathroom, locking himself in for the remainder of the day.

On the third day he couldn't keep anything straight anymore. He still called Abigail, but he noticed it was no longer every hour but every two or three. His sister's voice was worried, but he tried to tell her he was fine. In his own head he could hear his slurred words and wondered if he was finally losing it.

He blinked and he was standing in front of his bedroom, his hand on the door knob. He finished entering the room and paused. Hannibal was sitting on Will's bed, staring off into the distance. Will stared at the doll. He hadn't move him. He was sure of it. He hadn't even gone into the doll's room, neglecting to change his clothes or to bring him with him from room to room as he usually did. The doll wasn't supposed to be here. His one job was to sit patiently

in his room before he decided to finally kill Will. At that, every bad thought came crashing down before he knew it, he snapped.

“I know damned well I put you in your room, Hannibal.” Will stalked closer to the doll, towering over him. “How did you get here? Why are you here?”

The doll didn't answer, and Will became angry.

“Stop fucking around, Hannibal. I know you're real! You moved! I didn't move you, you did it on your own. Stop playing with my head and do something!”

Hannibal continued to sit on the bed. Will gritted his teeth and grabbed a fistful of his hair.

“Why? Why are you keeping me alive? I bought this house knowing people die here, and yet I come along and nothing happens. Why? Is this fun to you? Do you enjoy watching me going insane? Why haven't you killed me yet?” Will yelled, his hands balling into fists, but he kept them to his side. Frustrated tears leaked down his cheek, but he didn't care. He continued to yell at the doll, taunting him and pleading with him. Finally, he cracked.

“Why won't you kill me, you stupid doll?”

The room suddenly dropped in temperature. Will wouldn't have noticed it had his temperature not risen from his breakdown. He huffed and tried to get his breath, watching carefully.

“... Please, Hannibal,” he begged. “Just do it.”

Will wasn't expecting anything. Logically, there must have been an open window to let in a breeze of cool air. There was nothing supernatural about this house. He probably did put Hannibal in his room in his time lapse, trying to put the blame on fantastical dolls instead of his deteriorating mind. There was nothing but a broken man and let down expectations.

Will turned to go, but he found he couldn't. He tried to move his limbs, but nothing worked. He struggled for a moment before turning his attention back on Hannibal. The doll was still sitting there, staring at nothing. Then, in a flash, the doll's eyes blinked and he looked directly at Will.

Will let out a startled yelp and broke free of whatever was holding him. He backed away from the bed, but he didn't watch where he was going. His foot caught on the edge of the desk and he fell. His head struck the side of the wall and left him dazed on the floor. Will groaned, his head throbbing and the sharp smell of blood caught his nose. The room spun and darkened. Will lost the battle and fell unconscious.

–

When Will opened his eyes he was alone in his room and tucked in bed. He had no recollection of how he got there, his mind drawing a blank. He sat up, his head feeling heavy. He looked around the dark room, trying to remember what he did last. He couldn't remember anything.

Will rubbed his eyes as he heard the familiar click of dog paws on hardwood before Winston's gentle whining came from the other side of the door. Putting his lapse of time off to the side, Will stood up, and immediately sat back down. His head hurt like hell and the room spun. He rubbed his forehead before running a hand through his hair, and he gasped out in pain as his fingers ran over a sore patch.

Will froze and everything suddenly fell back into place. Hobbs was on the run again, his depression, Hannibal--

Hannibal.

Will jumped to his feet, ignoring the way his balance wobbled and ran to the doll's room. He flung open the door and turned on the lights and...

Found Hannibal sitting exactly where he had put him three days ago.

Will watched the doll as he eased into the room, his body shaking. Winston whined behind him, but Will ignored the dog for now. He walked until he was standing directly in front of the doll, staring him down, waiting. The doll didn't move. Will brought a shaking hand up and gently brushed Hannibal's hair.

"..." Will stared down at the doll before turning away and leaving the room, closing the door behind him. He patted Winston on the head and lead the way downstairs.

"You must be hungry," Will murmured as he glanced at the clock. It was a little past nine. Will was a little hungry too, but he could wait until morning. He gave the dog his meal before letting him outside. Will went to turn his laptop off, which was still on the kitchen table. He was just shutting the lid when he heard Winston bark. Will paused. It was too soon to let Winston in, the dog usually liking to run around a bit before he barked his demands. The barking continued, transforming into menacing growls. Will rushed to the window just as Winston let out a pained yelp and the door was flung open. He stopped dead in his tracks.

A man walked calmly in the door, his boots thumping against the tile floor. Will watched in fear as Garrett Jacob Hobbs let himself into his house and closed the door. The man looked over Will's frozen form before smiling.

"Hello, Officer Graham."

Chapter End Notes

Shit is about to get real in the next chapter. Are you ready, Will? Cuz I don't think you are.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will watched as Hobbs came closer and kept the table between them. He grabbed the knife that was on the kitchen counter, but Hobbs didn't look concerned. He just continued to smile as he finally came to a stop on the other side.

“You don't look so good, Officer. Have you been sleeping well?” the serial killer asked, and Will nearly growled. “I have to admit, this is a nice little place you found, hidden in the forest. It took me a while to find it.”

“How did you escape?” Will asked, but Hobbs just shrugged. “How did you find me?”

“It wasn't that hard to find you, but then again, anyone who decides to buy a house labeled as cursed is bound to draw attention. To be honest I'm a little disappointed.”

“That doesn't answer my question.” Will countered, moving when Hobbs moved. “How did you find out I wasn't in Baltimore anymore?”

“I over heard one of the prison guards talking about you. Said you had fled the State.”

“That still doesn't answer how you found this place.”

“Does it matter?” Hobbs asked. “I found you, and I'm going to finish what I started before you shot me.”

Will's hand tightened on his knife and he held it up in defense. If he could maim Hobbs, or strike him where he previously shot him, he might be able to run upstairs to his gun. Will knew the old gunshot wound on the serial killer's chest couldn't have been fully healed yet. Taking a change, Will was the one to move first.

Will reached across the table and caught Hobbs’ shirt with the tip of his blade, but the killer moved out of the way. He grabbed Will’s wrist and pulled him across the table, eliminating Will’s barrier. Will countered with his other hand, grabbing onto Hobbs making them both fall to the floor. Will regained composure first and brought the knife down. Hobbs grabbed his wrist again and a struggle ensued. Will almost won, but Hobbs managed to flip them. The wrist with the knife still in his hands, Hobbs pulled at just the right angle before a loud pop, followed by Will’s scream, echo in the kitchen.

Hobbs took the knife away, but Will continued to fight back. He kicked and clawed with his good hand and managed to strike him in the chest where the bullet wound was, but it didn’t last long. Hobbs got the upper hand and pinned Will to the floor. He landed a punch to Will's left cheek, narrowly missing his nose. Will yowled in pain, but he couldn't move. The serial killer drew his arm back for another strike when a loud thud from upstairs stopped him. Both men paused.

“Who's upstairs, Officer Graham?” Hobbs asked, but Will shook his head to the best of his ability.

“No one.” He was punched once again.

“Don't lie to me, boy. We both heard it.” Hobbs stood and dragged Will with him. He grabbed the discarded butcher's knife and held it against Will's throat as he pulled the man upstairs. Will tried to struggle, but a quick press of the blade and a sharp pain made Will stop. With his dislocated shoulder it would be a useless cause.

As they climbed the noise came again. It was as if something was being knocked over, like a chair or a night stand. Will's body began to freeze as he realized which room the noises were coming from. Hobbs must have too, for he stopped immediately in front of Hannibal's room. He lifted a fist and pounded on the ornate door.

“Come on out,” Hobbs called. “I just want to talk.”

Nothing happened.

Hobbs waited again before readjusting his grip on Will, the knife digging painfully into his neck. Will could feel small trickles of blood running down his neck and he did his best not to move. “You don't want me to hurt Officer Graham, do you?”

There was another moment of silence before the door slowly opened. The room was dark, and after making Will turn on the light, the men found the room to be completely empty.

The cause of the noise was indeed a couple of turned over chairs Will had left in the doll's room. Will's eyes flitted to the dresser, but Hannibal was nowhere to be seen. Hobbs looked over the room, kicking the chairs away as he pushed and pulled his captive along.

“Where are you hiding?” He called out, but no one answered. Hobbs jabbed the knife harder into Will’s neck. “You better come out, otherwise Officer Graham won’t have his head for long.”

In return the door slammed shut behind them and plunged them into darkness. The temperature in the room dropped, and Will could feel Hobbs’ body stiffen in alarm. He removed the knife and switched hands, holding the weapon out blindly. “Whose there? Show yourself.”

“So you're the one who sent me my new pet,” the deep voice said, and Will's breath caught in his throat. That was the dream voice. That means...

“Show yourself.” Hobbs ordered, twisting and turning to find the speaker, but it was too ark to see anything. Will let out a small whimper as his dislocated shoulder is jostled, and the room became colder.

“I think you've broken him far enough.” The voice ignored Hobbs' question, his tone dangerous. “Release him.”

But Hobbs held on tighter. The knife was no longer against Will's throat, but the pressure the man exerted on his sore body made him cry out in pain.

A growl echoed throughout the room. The air around them moved, followed by a loud crunch. Hobbs screamed in pain, his firm grasp around Will's torso gone, and Will fell to the ground. He landed in a pool of warm liquid smelling strongly of iron, and his years of being a cop told him it was blood.

As Hobbs screamed in the background, the voice continued in a bored tone. “Forgive me, William, it seems my powers aren't as good as they used to be. It has been a long time since I last fed, you understand.”

Will sat in his place, shock and pain rooting him as his mind began to fall away. There was no other explanation. It wasn’t a superstition, it wasn’t a story. The voice, it had to be the doll. Hannibal… Was alive. He didn't notice when he started to make small, distressed noises, but Hannibal did.

“Stop that.” and Will stopped. “Stand up, go out the door, and see to the mutt. I can hear him whining.”

Will blinked before he remembered Winston. He climbed to his feet slowly, the panic attack still at the edges of his nerves. He grabbed the handle and opened the door, but paused as the light from the hall illuminated the room. Still screaming in pain, Hobbs was writhing on the floor grasping at his arm, or what was left of it. The limb had been completely torn away, lumps of flesh scattered on the floor and blood poured from the wounds. Will stood paralyzed until Hannibal spoke again.

“William, go.” The doll commanded gently, and Will slipped out of the room and closed the door behind him. Hobbs’ screaming only got louder.

--

Will could feel the blood drying on his face, but he didn’t pay it any mind. He wrapped Winston’s injuries in a detached manner, eyes not focusing on anything. He was glad the dog wasn’t severely hurt, only his still healing paw and side taking the brunt of Hobbs’ attack. Will scratched and patted the dog, feeling for any other injuries.

A pitched scream echoed down to where he sat in his garage and he flinched. Winston whined and licked his face, but Will’s mind temporarily shut down. When the screaming continued to get louder and louder he covered his ears, ignoring the pain in his shoulder, and buried his face in Winston’s fur. The calm he had been feeling when Hannibal told him to go had left, leaving him back in the grips of a panic attack. Will bit back the cry that nearly slipped through lips and focused breathing and on the smell of dog fur and dust from the garage.

He was losing control when he became aware of the deafening silence. Slowly, he lowered his hands and looked toward the door to the kitchen. He didn’t know what to do. Should he sit out in the garage until Hannibal came for him? Or should he wait until he thought it was safe, let the doll do what it wanted with Hobbs?

Or maybe he should leave, silently open the garage and climb into the car with Winston and drive off into the night. Will shuttered and shook his head. No, that wouldn't work. Hannibal already proved how fast he was. He would barely open the garage door before Hannibal popped up.

Will took a shaky breath before standing on trembling legs, and he slowly eased back into the quiet house with Winston. He made it to the staircase before chickening out and returning to the kitchen. He had no idea what to expect, but he knew he didn't want to see it.

"William," Will leaped from his spot and his head jerked in the direction of the voice. Sitting up on his shelf in the kitchen, Hannibal watched Will with a blank expression on his face, red eyes practically glowing. Will whimpered and tore his gaze away, refusing to look at the doll. Will didn't want to think about how the doll was covered head to toe in blood. Winston whined at his side, but he didn't move.

Hannibal tsked from his spot and Will's eyes were drawn to him again when he stood up. Gracefully, Hannibal jumped down and landed perfectly on the kitchen table. Will flinched as the doll came closer, ducking his head to look at the floor. He knew better than to run. Hannibal walked until he was at the edge and sat down once again.

"You should sit, Will," Hannibal said softly, but Will shook his head. He was silent for a moment before he motioned to the chair. "William, I must insist that you sit down. You're trembling."

Will continued disobey until he could no longer stand. He collapsed into the chair, effectively bringing him closer to Hannibal. He watched in his peripheral vision as Hannibal nodded, satisfied with Will's compliance, before reaching out to touch Will's face. Will jerked back before the tiny limb could connect with his cheek.

"Are you going to kill me?" Will whispered.

"Do you still want to die?" Hannibal countered. "Judging how you fought back against—what was his name? Hobbs?—you seemed like you wanted to live."

Will didn't reply, and the kitchen grew silent until Hannibal sighed.

"Here's what I want you to do, William. You are to go into the living room, take off your clothes, and throw them into the fireplace. You will start the fire before you head upstairs to take a shower." Hannibal stood up, and Will's eyes flickered at the movement. "After your shower, you are going to go to bed. Do I make myself clear?"

Will shuttered at the authoritative voice and slowly nodded.

"Good. I still have the mess upstairs to clean up, so I'll be in the bedroom as soon as I'm done."

Will remained in his chair, his head down. He opened his mouth, but quickly shut it again.

"Yes, Will? You may speak." Hannibal coaxed, and Will finally lifted his head.

“…W…What about my arm?” he asked. The doll’s gaze moved to the limp limb.

“Can you move it?”

“I… Yes, but I shouldn’t.”

“Try not to use it, then. Because of your current state of mind I don’t want to try and set it now. I’ll assist you in getting out of your clothes and in the shower.”

Will stilled. How was Hannibal going to pop his shoulder back into place? Will wanted to object, but he was just so tired. Giving up, Will stood slowly from his chair and waited further instructions from the doll. Hannibal watched him before raising his arms. It took Will a couple seconds to realize he wanted to be picked up. As gently as he could, Will picked up Hannibal and settled him in the crook of his good arm. The doll moved from the spot and rested on his shoulder.

“Now, let’s get out of these dirty clothes, shall we?”

Chapter End Notes

Due to popular demand the next chapter will be from Hannibal's point of view from the beginning when Will first enters the Doll House. After that we will return to the present story.

(I hope I wrote Hobbs in character. I actually never saw the opening episodes with him, just the ones with him in flashback, but I think I got it.)

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

> I decided to change the order of the chapters, so instead of Hannibal's chapter this is a plot chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will leaned back against the headboard with the blankets pulled around his shoulders. Hannibal sat across from him at the end of the bed, staring directly at the human while Will kept his eyes averted and his knees drawn to his chest. Will's shoulder throbbed faintly as he pressed harder against the headboard. When he had finally gone to bed after cleaning up last night it was still dislocated, but when he woke this morning it was back in place. He shuttered at the thought of the doll's hands on him in his sleep. He had magic of some sort, but Will wasn't sure of what extent.

Will didn't want to talk, and Hannibal didn't push him. They sat in a stressed silence: Will continuing to try and ignore the tiny creature and Hannibal waiting for Will to make the first move.

Finally, Will cleared his throat and pulled the blankets tighter around him. "… Who are you?" he finally asked.

"I am Hannibal," the doll answered, and Will's nose wrinkled in annoyance.

"You don't have a real name?"

"Does it matter what names I've been given before?" Hannibal countered. "You named me 'Hannibal', therefore I am Hannibal."

"Did you kill the others who named you?"

"Do you even need to ask?"

They fell into silence.

"Why do you kill them?" Will questioned.

"To get power." Hannibal stated simply. Will growled and grabbed a fistful of his own hair.

"Stop giving me these short answers and tell me the truth!"

"Well then," Hannibal drawled. "Why don't you ask better questions? You're a smart man, William. You can figure it out."

Will stopped pulling at his hair. Slowly he lowered his arm back into the confines of the blankets and risked to look at Hannibal dead on. The doll—the *thing*—stared back, sitting perfectly still for Will to observe him. He didn't look like a doll, not any more. The ball-joints at his elbows and neck were gone, and the once barely there seams were completely smoothed away. It was as if they were never there. What used to be hands were now sharp, jagged claws gleaming in the early light. Upon closer inspection Hannibal's limbs seemed more angular and abrupt, as if he was double jointed. Red eyes blinked slowly as Will looked him over.

"You… You're not a doll, but you enjoy pretending to be one."

No, that wasn't it. Will shook his head and tried again.

"You are something supernatural. A maleficent creature who enjoys bringing suffering to others."

Yes, that was closer, but why? He could just like to hurt people, but there was something else Will was missing. He squinted his eyes as he thought, catching the small smile on Hannibal's face.

"…You feed off blood… No, that's just something extra. You like the blood, but you don't need it to survive. Instead, you feed off the fears that come off your victims as you make your move." Will paused, a sudden thought coming to him. "That's why you take your time killing them. You make them scared, pump up their fear before killing them."

The pleased, sharp smile confirmed everything Will said, but there was still one thing that bothered him. Why a doll? Why would such a creature want to be here? Why stay in this house? Unless…

"…You can't leave. Something is keeping you here. You would have been long gone if you hadn't been tied to the house."

"And you would be correct," Hannibal said as he stood. Will jerked back, biting back a hiss as his shoulder flared up. He watched as Hannibal made his way closer to Will's covered feet, stepping carefully until he seated himself upon the human's knees. Will wondered what Hannibal would do if he kicked him off the bed.

"I am what you humans might call a fae." Hannibal began. "My kind enjoy tricking and toying with humans who wander into our territory. Usually we keep them alive, a little worse for wear, but functional. We love nothing more than to torment humans, eat berries, and dance in the night. However," a flash of sharp teeth as Hannibal gave a cruel smile. "A few of us need a little more substance in order to survive."

"The fear." Will muttered, and Hannibal nodded.

"Yes, but not just the fear. We also require their life force. You see, we discovered the wonders of dark magic, and once it took root in our veins there was no stopping it."

“But this doesn’t explain why you are attached to the house. What happened to the other fae? Why are you alone?”

Hannibal paused, his eyes distant. He slowly blinked before taking a big breath.

“What happened to my kinsmen is for another time. How I became a permanent fixture to this house is because I wronged a witch.”

“A witch?” Will parroted.

“To be more precise she was a shaman priestess, but to save time she was a witch.”

Will tried to wrap his head around the idea of a witch, let alone a shaman priestess, in modern America. Hannibal seemed to sense his thoughts and added, “I’ve been here for a long time, William. I’ve been here since the house was first built.”

Before Will could remember the years the realtor said to him when he first bought the house, Hannibal continued on. “Long story short, I tried to feed off the witch, and she was not pleased. She cast a spell on me, stripping me of my powers and binding me to the house and property for the rest of eternity. The only way I can escape is if I regain my powers and feed of the life force of a human every month for two years.”

“That doesn’t sound difficult.” Will said.

Hannibal quietly laughed and shook his head. “You’d be surprised. I have to feed every month or else my powers drain. Once I make a kill not many are keen to come. I’d be lucky if I was able to feed three times in a year.”

Every month for two years. Will couldn’t, wouldn’t, believe it. This had to be a trick of some sort. It seemed too easy.

“Why a doll?”

“Hm?” Hannibal hummed.

“Why do you take on a doll’s form? Why make yourself known at all in the house? You said that you can leave the house as long as you are within the property line. Why not move about and lure bystanders?”

Hannibal shook his head. “Dearest, William, if such things were easy. By draining my powers the witch made it so if I don’t feed I become immobile. The only way I can regain mobility is if I feed off of a human’s fear. Usually it takes time, others it is immediate. Take you, for example,” the fae gestured. “Had you not had a nightmare the first night I probably wouldn’t have been able to move for another week. You are a hard one to scare, I’ll give you that.”

Will nearly shuddered at the idea of Hannibal stalking him while he slept, drinking in his nightmares and becoming stronger each day. He was glad he only had a few, but still it was unnerving.

Hannibal continued. “Because I cannot move I must look like something that could potentially cause fear, and what’s scarier than a cursed doll?”

Will finally did shudder and shake his head. This was all too much for him. With the attack and pain and talking dolls, Will just wanted some normalcy. Shaking his head again, Will bit back a yawn that threatened to escape, but the fae’s careful eyes caught him.

“You should rest, William. You’ve had a rough few days.” But Will shook his head.

“I have to let Winston out, and I need to check his wounds. And I need to call Abby.”

Hannibal was silent before nodding. “Very well, but I must insist on accompanying you. It isn’t that I don’t trust you, but I fear your mind might fall into dark ideas again.”

Will shuddered and carefully left the safety of the warm blankets. Hannibal moved with him, standing on the bed and watching as Will straightened his clothes and put on a pair of slippers. He reached his hands out, and Will blinked down at him.

“Why not move on your own?” he asked. “I’m sure it would be faster.”

“You would be correct in that statement.” Hannibal said, but he didn’t lower his arms. Will sighed and picked up the fae, allowing him to move to his shoulder. “It’s just this way is more… interesting.”

Will pushed down the urge to brush off Hannibal before heading downstairs to the kitchen, his mind in a turmoil and a surprisingly comforting weight on his shoulder.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter is Hannibal's POV, I promise this time :D

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal, as he was newly named, didn't know what to think of the human who now resided in his house. He was different from the others, he'll give him that, but he puzzled him. Most of his meals were adventure seeking, adrenaline junkies who had heard about Hannibal's home and decided to try and stay as long as they could. None of them lasted, the fae had seen to that. The longer Hannibal could play with his meals, sending them into a panic and blubbering mess, the faster his powers would grow. He was limited on what he could and couldn't do, but it was no matter. As long as he could instill fear he could drain their life force until he was strong enough to kill them.

Many of the previous prey had escaped, growing wise and fleeing the house in a matter of days or in the first week. However, the courageous ones who tried to stick it out met an untimely, and bloody, end. Hannibal would feast for days, consuming their life force and body until there was nothing left. It was unfortunate when someone came around looking for them, taking his well-earned kill. His last meal was nearly seven months ago and with his powers draining and boredom sinking in, the creature in doll form was excited when the new toy came.

But this human, William Graham, was different. He was aware of Hannibal's existence and acknowledged the mysterious deaths, but he was neither a thrill seeker nor a lover of the unusual. He was just a man who needed a place to stay, and he happened to pick the Doll House. He didn't even enter Hannibal's room when he bought the house. It was the first thing prey did when they came to the second floor, but Will only paused once before moving on. It was… curious. He probably wouldn't have even come into the room had Hannibal not coaxed him, using the little power he had left to entice the human.

When Hannibal finally laid eyes on the human, there was nothing special about him. He had unkempt hair, slight dark circles under his eyes hidden by his glasses, and scruffy facial hair. He didn't look any different than the other meals, but he was neither enthusiastic nor frightened when he found Hannibal. Carefully, he picked the doll up and held him in the light, unbending his limbs. With his façade in place, Hannibal was able to keep his eyes open without needing to blink, taking in everything about the human. Will was cautious, careful with how he handled Hannibal as if he knew he was a living creature. It was unnerving since the previous owners who dared to pick him up were all too rough and treated him like a normal doll.

Will stroked Hannibal's head and face, and a small smile graced his features. Hannibal couldn't help but noticed how young the man looked.

“So, you're the cursed doll, hm?” he asked, almost startling Hannibal into dropping his façade. “You look pretty normal to me, though it is strange you don't have any clothes.”

Will put him back on the chair and looked through the boxes in the room. Not finding what he wanted, he turned back to the doll and held up one finger. “I’ll be right back.”

Alone, Hannibal nearly let his façade drop. It wasn’t the first time humans have talked to Hannibal before, but the way he talked to the fae was as if he expected an answer back. It was puzzling. Before Hannibal could ponder on it any more, the human returned with a pair of scissors and a sewing kit. He relocated Hannibal onto the table and pulled up a chair.

“My sister owns a bunch of dolls like you. I used to fix their clothes from time to time. Usually small stuff like rips or buttons falling off. I stopped doing it once my sister got the hang of sewing, so I might be a little rusty.” Will said casually, as if he were talking to a person instead of a doll. Hannibal watched as he measured him and cut pieces of cloth from the sheet, transforming it into some sort of smock. The doll wanted to blink purely in surprise as he was put in the ugliest robe he had ever seen. He considered disregarding toying with Will and bite him. The man made a small noise of approval.

“Nothing fancy, but it is better than having to stare at your nakedness.” The man laughed and Hannibal was shocked again as he was bopped on the nose. Will looked shocked, too, his face heating up as he brought a hand up and rubbed his temples. He seemed to regret his actions, but the more Hannibal thought about it, the more he found he didn’t mind. The human was trying to be civil. This was the first time anyone had thought to put clothes on him, leaving him to his room or making fun of his lack of clothing. This man was kind.

Will put Hannibal back on the chair and left the room before coming back with blankets and a pillow. He set up a bed on the couch, and he was about to crawl in when he looked over at Hannibal. He seemed to have an argument in his mind before he left once again, but this time returning with a washcloth and a towel. He positioned Hannibal so he was laying down, his head cushioned by the washcloth and his body covered in the towel.

“Hope this means you won't kill me in my sleep, right?” Will laughed as he readjusted the towel before turning off the lights.

Hannibal remained awake, his eyes making out the form under the blankets as Will slowly fell asleep, his shoulders rising and falling with each breath.

It didn’t last long. A few hours into the night Will began to mumble in his sleep, and Hannibal could taste the fear radiating off of him. He drank it in, feeling his powers growing stronger and stronger. Soon the muttering turned into whimpering, the human kicking off the blankets and his pillow fell from under his head. After another couple minutes he jerked awake, a choked scream caught in his throat. Hannibal watched from the safety of his “bed” as Will frantically crawled off the couch and fumbled to find the light switch. As soon as the light turned on, he calmed immensely, his blue eyes darting around unseeingly.

After he calmed down, he fell to the floor, and Hannibal thought for a second he was crying. Fear and sorrow continued to radiate off him, and Hannibal consumed it all. However, it

didn’t taste right. He didn’t like the aftertaste it left behind, and he found, for some reason, he didn’t like the sight of the human cowering on the floor.

Will finally picked himself up, left the room, and returned nearly an hour later with damp hair, and clean clothes. It was as if he had done this before and was simply going through the routine. After an internal debate, he switched the light off and crawled back onto the couch. Not once did he look at Hannibal. It was as if he forgot the doll existed.

Time passed and Will still didn’t fall back to sleep, the dark not hiding anything from Hannibal. Hannibal watched the human, fear still coming off him but in tiny shimmers. It was all wrong. This fear was too sour and dull. It was nothing like the previous prey when Hannibal frightened them. Perhaps that was it, but the doll shook his head. He had all the time to ponder on this new human, but right now, he was uncomfortable with the human just lying in the dark, eyes refusing to shut.

Finally, Hannibal slowly sat up. He didn’t have to worry about being seen; humans were such weak creatures. He had renewed energy from Will’s nightmare, even if he didn’t enjoy it, and climbed to the couch arm. Reaching out with is powers, Hannibal gave Will’s mind the suggestion of sleep, and in return the human yawned. Surprisingly, he proved to be resilient to the suggestion, forcing shut eyes open and staring determinedly at the ceiling. He did, however, continue to yawn from time to time.

Hannibal tried a new tactic. Softly, so he didn’t scare him, he began to hum. It would do him no good to have a frightened human now. He could get up and turn on the light, exposing Hannibal’s perch on the couch. No, it would be best to begin his stalking tomorrow.

Will’s resistance waned and his eyes drooped closed. Hannibal increased the temperature in the air and watched as the human repositioned himself on the couch and finally close his eyes for the night. Seeing the man relaxed in sleep due to his influence tugged at something inside Hannibal. He dared to move along the back of the couch and perch on the other couch arm, closer to Will’s head. He reached out and ran a hand over the human’s head, brushing hair away from his forehead and willing him into a deeper sleep.

Tonight he would observe, but tomorrow he would begin his hunt.

Hannibal’s plan to toy with the human changed the next day. Instead of leaving him in his room, Will took him with him when he went downstairs to finish the kitchen. He put him on a shelf and made sure he was safe before restarting his task. None of the previous owners had done this, either. They just kept him locked in his room, occasionally peeking in if they’ve had a scare to make sure he was still there. Will, on the other hand, didn’t seem to mind his presence. He would carry him from room to room or set him aside on a shelf while he worked. Occasionally, Will would talk to him. It was usually about mundane things or complaining about the state of the house, asking questions and not seeming to mind not getting answers. The more and more Hannibal observed, the more he found he liked the human.

It was after the kitchen was completed when Will gave him a name. The doll had never been given a name before, so when Will decided upon the name “Hannibal” he felt a sudden surge of energy he had never felt before. He felt powerful.

Of all of the surprises, Will’s politeness was the most welcome. He treated Hannibal as if he was real, talking to him or making sure he looked comfortable. While the clothes he made for him were horrible, the meaning behind them was touching. Hannibal found he couldn’t be mad too long for the human’s generosity for the first few days, and when he finally received decent clothes Will was thorough in his attempts to meet with his “personality”. Hannibal felt a pang of regret when he couldn’t thank the man for his new wardrobe.

He showed his thanks by not destroying the mutt he brought home with him. Hannibal hated dogs. They could see through his façade and alerted their masters to his true self. The only thing that stopped the doll from striking the dog down was the fear that radiated off Will. His fear, while aimed at Hannibal, circled around what the doll could do to the dog. Will wasn’t a stupid man, he knew there was something wrong with the doll. Hannibal could see the doubt in his eyes when something unnatural happened, especially if it involved the doll moving. While he was still trying to maintain his disguise, Hannibal wanted Will to slowly come to terms with the fae’s supernatural properties. But no matter how hard he tried, Will continued to turn a blind eye.

However, despite choosing to ignore the supernatural, Will still had a healthy dose of fear when it came to Hannibal. When the dog became aggressive toward the doll, he wasn’t scared of Hannibal, he was scared of what Hannibal could do to the dog should he attack. Instead, Hannibal willed the dog to sleep, as much as it pained him to use the little energy he gained on the stupid mutt.

He knew he did the correct option when Will carried him to the little bed the human graciously bought for him and tucked him in.

“... If you are cursed, Hannibal, please don't hurt Winston. He's just a dog; he doesn't know better.” Hannibal felt another swell of emotion as Will gently touched his nose and turned away. “Have a good night, Hannibal. See you in the morning.”

A small part of Hannibal wished he could have said, “Good night,” back.

Over the course of the month Will lived at the Doll House Hannibal learned many things about his human.

Will liked to stay busy. He finished refurnishing and fixing the living room and kitchen within a week, and he turned his attention on the other rooms soon after. He left Hannibal’s room alone, which the fae was grateful for. He didn’t want to be sitting in a room that smelled like paint for hours on end. When the bedroom and guest rooms were all fixed, Will worked on the outside of the house, the fence, the garden, and soon he ran out of things to

fix. After that, Will would be gone for long periods of time on certain days, always bidding Hannibal with a “see you in a little bit” before heading off to fish or go into town.

The second thing Hannibal learned was Will loved and cared for his sister very much. Abigail would call the house practically every day, or Will would call her. He was in constant contact with her, telling her how his day has been or asking her about school. They never talked for long, but Hannibal could tell Will enjoyed talking with his sister. He would smile more for the rest of the day after he talked to her. A pang of nostalgia would strike Hannibal on such days, but he forced the memories away. That was the past; there was nothing to look back on.

The third was Will had nightmares. Lots of nightmares. Sometimes he would wake up during them, sometimes he would remain asleep, and his cries and whimpers would trail into Hannibal’s room. On such nights Hannibal would take what he could despite their pungent taste. He didn’t understand why he didn’t enjoy the taste of his fear. He scared him on purpose once, moved from one room to another to see his reaction. Will jumped and was scared, but the taste still didn’t sit well with the doll.

Then Will started to sleep walk. It took a few times for Hannibal to realize he was sleep walking for Will only walked around on the top floor, never venturing down stairs. It was when he entered Hannibal’s room and stood listlessly near the wall did the fae see the vacant look in his eyes. After that, Hannibal kept a closer eye on him, following him from room to room with his rejuvenated powers.

One night Will’s routine changed and, in his slumber, he walked downstairs, Hannibal and eventually Winston following closely behind. The human wandered around the living room in laps before wandering to the kitchen. Hannibal had just enough time to reach out his powers to hold the front door shut when Will grabbed the handle. The man pulled desperately at the door, a small sob escaping his lips.

Refusing to remain silent, Hannibal called out. “What are you doing William?” When Will didn’t answer the fae crawled up the human’s body and perched on his shoulder, whispering in his ear. “What are you doing, William?”

“I-I have to find her.” Will said as he yanked on the door knob. His head moved around, as if he was looking for something.

“Who?” Hannibal asked, stroking Will’s face and trying to calm him. The man quieted slightly, but not by much.

“Cassie, Cassie Boyle. She's missing. I have to find her.”

Not understanding who this was, Hannibal played along and coaxed, “But, William, Cassie is safe.”

“No, no she's not!” Will argued.

“Yes, she it,” the fae said softly. “She's sleeping in her bed, see?”

Will’s body turned, his eyes seeing nothing, but he must have seen something in his mind. He walked a short distance, hand reaching out to touch whatever he was seeing. Winston approached, fur brushing against his hand as he sniffed the offered hand.

“See?” Hannibal coaxed, sensing a change in Will’s body. “She's fine, William. Come, let's go back to bed.”

He guided Will back upstairs, carefully directing his feet so he didn’t stub his toes or trip. As Will passed Hannibal’s room the fae had an idea.

“Aren't you forgetting something?”

He willed the door open and directed Will in. He wasn’t sure what Will saw, but the man uttered a small “Oh, right.”

Hannibal made sure he was back in his usual spot before Will reached it, and he allowed himself to be picked up. Will cradled him gently in his arms and returned to his room, Winston following close behind. Will eased back into the bed and held Hannibal to his chest. The man’s eyes were still open, uncomprehending what was going on. Hannibal reached his hand up and began to stroke his cheek. Soon, the eyes drooped close and Will fell back into a deep sleep. Hannibal continued to watch the human, his mind working out what he had just witnessed, and his body sorting through the surge of power he felt as he was cradled in Will’s arms.

Something drove Will to the Doll House, that Hannibal was sure of. No human as normal as Will would dare to even consider moving into the fae’s prison. Hannibal learned early on the human had a dark past and was still haunted by it. He hid it well, Hannibal had to give him props for that, but the nightmares got progressively worse, and in turn so did the sleep walking. The fae was able to steer him out of harms way, and now that he was stronger he was able to move freely, moving to Will’s room when he sensed a nightmare coming. The human would calm under his care, growing still and pulling Hannibal closer to him. The fae wondered what brought these dreams, what was responsible for Will’s distress.

It was only after Abigail came to visit Hannibal fully understood what happened, and he couldn’t help but feel sorry for the poor man. The pieces fell into place: Will’s need to protect, his caring heart, and his dreams filled with the frantic search for a girl who was beyond saving. Hannibal listened from his spot crushed between the siblings as Will cried his eyes out, Abigail quietly trying to sooth him.

“I couldn't do it... I just couldn't do it...” Will sobbed, and Hannibal wanted nothing more than to reach out and hold the human. It was a strange feeling, one he had not felt for a long time. To have a human bring out Hannibal’s need to protect was beyond anything the fae was willing to delve into. Right now, he had a Will to console.

Extending his power, Hannibal put Abigail and the mutt to sleep, but Will's mind resisted as it tended to do. The fae stroked Will's rough cheek, gently shushing him.

"Shh. It'll be alright, William."

Will's shoulders relaxed almost instantly and the human tumbled into sleep along with the others. Hannibal didn't sleep that night. He kept a vigil over the room, ensuring all of the tenants slept throughout the night.

The next morning Hannibal found himself in Will's lap as the human stared down at him, his face completely blank. Will just sat there before slowly moving forward. He paused and came to a decision before he laid a gentle kiss on the fae's head.

"...Thanks, for not killing me, Hannibal. I... both appreciate and hate you for it."

At that moment, Hannibal knew he could never kill this human.

Hannibal thought Will would have improved after Abigail's visit. He had been living at the Doll House for nearly a month, and his spirit was up. He had applied for a job in town and he was going to go back into town to set up a date to start. His steps were light and he smiled more, which Hannibal found he was grateful for. He liked to see his pet happy.

However, when Will returned from his trip in town his good mood was shattered. Hannibal had been placed in his room, and when Will failed to come get him he snuck down to the kitchen where he found Will pacing, his cellphone against his ear.

"Are you safe?" Will practically shouted, his brows furrowed and sweat beginning to trickle down his face. "Where are you right now?"

Abigail's voice ran clear over the other end, replying just as shaky as Will's own. "Will, I'm fine-

"No you're not! I'm coming to--"

"No! The world doesn't know I exist, so I'm fine, but he could be after you, Will. I'm scared."

As Will tried to comfort his sister, Hannibal's ears perked up. He? Who was this he?

"Have the police contacted you at all?" Will asked.

"Yes, your old partner called me. He tried to get a hold of you, but...." Abigail trailed off, but Will nodded. It was something only the siblings knew, but Hannibal didn't pay it any attention. Whomever they were talking about was upsetting his William, and that simply wouldn't do.

"I'll check my e-mail to see if he tried to contact me," Will continued, his free hand flying to his computer. "I'll tell him I want you under police protection--"

Abigail's distressed voice cut him off, cracking and trembling. “Will, don't you see? He's after you! He's after you.”

Hannibal withdrew from his spot, returning to his room. He could feel his anger boiling, his powers growing with his fury. How dare someone threaten to harm his pet. He wouldn’t stand for it. Hannibal began to extend his power, beginning to put a veil over the house. Suddenly, he stopped, an idea coming to him. Hannibal needed to feed off something other than Will’s fears. If the human was to continue living here, then his safety was at risk. Even though Hannibal didn’t want to hurt him, he could still accidentally begin to feed off of him. And that wouldn’t do.

Raising the veil, Hannibal sat back in his chair and waited. His new prey would be here any day.

While Hannibal had his feelers out for any signs of the man who caused Will such distress, he had to keep his eye on his poor pet. It was harder than normal; Will stopped coming into his room to carry him with him, to talk to him, or to wish him goodnight. In fact, the fae doubted Will slept at all over the past two days. The human’s mind was elsewhere, making it easier for Hannibal to follow him from room to room. Soon the fae discovered Will would completely black out, but his body would keep on going. At first it wasn’t anything to worry about, until he caught Will with a knife near his throat.

Hannibal snapped at the human’s mind, thrusting him back into consciousness. Once Will became aware, he gasped, dropped the knife, and ran into the bathroom. He did not come out for the rest of the day. Hannibal sat outside the door, listening to see if he was going to do anything foolish, but the only thing he heard were sobs. The fae couldn’t stand to hear the noise, to taste the pungent fear, and he willed the human into sleep.

As he helped guide Will’s sleeping body back to bed, Hannibal felt it. The life force of the man who was hurting his pet. With Will in bed, Hannibal returned to his room and using nearly all of his power he called out to the man, beckoning for him to come.

He smiled when he felt his prey respond.

Will was distressed. More than he had been for the past two days. It was as if he knew the man was coming. His fear ran clear throughout the house, the dark circles under his eyes prominent and his hair growing curlier and curlier as he sweated. Hannibal couldn’t risk putting him to sleep this time. He had to save his energy for when his prey came, but he didn’t like the state Will was in. He still had not come to his room, so Hannibal decided to go to him. His presence seemed to calm the human.

The fae waited patiently in Will’s room, and when Will stumbled in, he forced himself to remain still.

Will stopped. He watched Hannibal, and the fae knew he had made a mistake. Will’s face screwed up into a scowl and he stalked closer to the bed.

“I know damned well I put you in your room, Hannibal.” The human snarled, and Hannibal was shocked. This was the first time he had ever seen him remotely angry. “How did you get here? Why are you here?”

Hannibal didn’t answer, which made Will angrier.

“Stop fucking around, Hannibal. I know you're real! You moved! I didn't move you, you did it on your own. Stop playing with my head and do something!”

It took massive effort not to do something, just to assuage the human. Instead, he sat on the bed and watched as Will stormed around the room.

“Why? Why are you keeping me alive?” Hannibal jerked, but Will didn’t notice. “I bought this house knowing people die here, and yet I come along and nothing happens. Why? Is this fun to you? Do you enjoy watching me going insane? Why haven't you killed me yet?”

Is that what brought the human here? To die? Hannibal almost couldn’t believe it. The realization made him… angry. No, he was furious. How dare Will think he could seek out his death at his hands. That was not allowed.

“Why won't you kill me, you stupid doll?”

Will would have to be taught a lesson. The fae wouldn’t punish him too harshly; the human wasn’t in his right state of mind. Any other human would have been turned into a bloody mess, but Hannibal knew Will didn’t mean it. He had seen his heart and knew it would not make a good meal.

Hannibal decided for his punishment Will should be frightened. Not too much, but just so he knew what he was dealing with. Locking the human in place, Hannibal allowed himself to move, just slightly, and look straight into Will’s eyes.

The reaction was instantiations. Will violently shook, breaking out of Hannibal’s hold. Before the fae could do anything, Will had backed up against his desk and fell over, his head cracking against the wall. Hannibal leapt from his spot and raced to his side, but the human was out cold. Blood trickled down his forehead. Hannibal cursed and held his hands against the wound, sealing the broken skin shut. The smell of Will’s blood drove him crazy. It took all of his will power to stop himself from giving a little taste.

“You poor, thing.” The fae said, brushing the curls out of the human’s face. “Don’t worry. It will all be over soon.”

He might not accept the fae, but Hannibal was going to do everything he could to ensure he was safe.

The man was useless, not even worth Hannibal’s time. The fae reveled in his screams as he tore into him, consuming his flesh and life force. The blood was sweet upon his tongue and the flesh exquisite. It had been far too long since Hannibal last fed. The swine deserved every

bite and every rip of skin for daring to harm his darling pet. Will's shoulder had been dislocated, and the thought of his poor human in pain caused a surge of anger to ripple through Hannibal as he tore into man once more. Now that he had completely exposed himself, Hannibal knew Will couldn't deny the fact he was real any longer. As much as he wanted to continue his feast, once the body grew silent and still Hannibal went out to search for his pet. He couldn't risk letting him leave the house.

Will was in the kitchen, his body shaking and his arm hanging uselessly at his side. Hannibal observed the human as he took tentative steps toward the living room. He paused in front of the stairs, his functioning arm raised to grab the rails. At the last minute, he skittered back to the kitchen, his eyes becoming cloudy in panic. Unseen, Hannibal jumped up to the shelf Will liked to put him when he cooked.

"William." Hannibal cut through his panicked haze and the man jumped. His eyes shot to where the fae perched and immediately looked away. Hannibal frowned before leaping to the table. Will took a shaky step back, but he didn't run, which Hannibal was grateful for. The human watched as he approached in his peripheral vision, his good hand clutched to his chest in defense.

"You should sit, Will," Hannibal said softly.

Will shook his head.

"William, I must insist that you sit down. You're trembling." Hannibal pushed the slightest bit an order in his suggestion, and it took mere seconds before Will practically fell onto the chair. Pleased, Hannibal reached out to help ease Will as he had done in the past, but the human violently jerked back.

"Are you going to kill me?"

"Do you still want to die?" Hannibal lowered his hand, pushing aside the pain of being rejected. "Judging how you fought back against—what was his name? Hobbs?—you seemed like you wanted to live."

The kitchen fell into silence, and Hannibal sighed. His pet was going through a traumatic experience. He had to be patient with him.

"Here's what I want you to do, William." The fae began, trying to gain eye contact, but the skittish man denied him at every attempt. "You are to go into the living room, take off your clothes, and throw them into the fireplace. You will start the fire before you head upstairs to take a shower." Hannibal stood up, and Will's eyes flickered at the movement. "After your shower, you are going to go to bed. Do I make myself clear?"

Will's shoulders slumped in defeat, his eyes closing as he nodded.

"Good. I still have the mess upstairs to clean up, so I'll be in the bedroom as soon as I'm done."

Will opened his mouth, a small noise passing his lips before he fell silent once more, his mouth snapping shut. Hannibal held his hands out, encouraging him to speak.

“Yes, Will? You may speak.”

“…W…What about my arm?” Will finally spoke, his voice nothing but a whisper. Hannibal studied the limp limb, knowing well any movement would cause harm.

“Can you move it?”

“I… Yes, but I shouldn’t.”

“Try not to use it, then. Because of your current state of mind I don’t want to try and set it now. I’ll assist you in getting out of your clothes and in the shower.”

Will’s eyes widened and he shook his head slightly. A clear form of objection, did Will oppose of the thought of Hannibal’s hands upon him? Or was it the idea of the fae helping in in the shower? Either way, the human had no choice in the matter. It was for his own good.

It didn’t take long for Will to fall asleep, the shock and pain did wonders on his system. Hannibal sat on the pillow, running his hands on the man’s forehead and still damp curls. He had just set his shoulder, waiting until he was in a deep sleep before attempting to touch it. Combined with his body’s defenses and Hannibal’s powers, Will did not wake.

Hannibal continued to comb his claws through Will’s hair before leaning down to give him a kiss. They would have to talk in the morning. Hopefully, Will would be rational and consider his current predicament. It wouldn’t be hard to keep him bound to him now that the fae had his powers at full strength for the rest of the month. He just had to sway Will before the next month was up. Yes, they would have to talk, for Hannibal was unwilling to give up his new pet. He would keep him, even if it was against his wishes.

Chapter End Notes

Hey all! Just wanted to say thanks for all the comments, bookmarks, kudos, and in general thanks for reading :D I will be gone for a little bit because I only have one more full week of school before finals. Got to attempt to get some good grades if I want to graduate next winter :D

Until next time~

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal insisted that they share a room at night.

“No.” Will said as he walked into the bathroom. He didn’t need to turn around to know the fae followed him.

“Why not?” Hannibal asked from his perch upon the door.

“I don’t like the idea of you sleeping with me.” Will answered as he began to brush his teeth. He could feel the fae’s eyes burrowing into him.

“We’ve been sleeping together for the past week and a half, Will.” Hannibal pointed out, his eyes trying to seek Will’s out in the mirror. Will kept his head down.

“That was before I knew you were alive.” Will spat in the sink and rinsed out his mouth.

“I’ve always been alive, Will. Nothing has changed.”

Will didn’t answer as he dried his mouth on the towel, eyes still cast down. He walked out of the bathroom and lead the way to Hannibal’s room, opening the door for him. He refused to look in the room.

“I just don’t want to, Hannibal.” Will sighed, watching the fae in his peripheral vision as he walked towards him. He stopped a few feet away, his face blank as he looked from the door to Will. He was so small, barely coming up to his knee. So small, so fragile and weak looking. It would only take one well place foot to end his existence.

But Hannibal wasn’t fragile. He wasn’t weak. He could rip off the arm of a full-grown man with the wave of his hand. Will shuddered at the thought of what those claws and teeth could do.

“Tell me, William, how has your sleep been since I started sleeping in your room?”

Will tried not to flinch, but he ended up shuffling his feet anyway. Since he had started to wake up with Hannibal “mysteriously” in his bed Will hadn’t had a single nightmare. Aside from the nightmare when Abigail came over and the past four days, Will had been sleeping soundly at night. Hannibal was like a dream catcher, catching every bad dream and leaving nothing behind.

However, Will didn’t want to say that was the reason he didn’t want Hannibal to sleep with him. The thought of a dreamless sleep was near utopic for him, but it was the fae’s diet that drew Will away from finding comfort in the “doll”. Will knew he radiated fear in his sleep, and the idea of having Hannibal, a being that fed off fear to become stronger, near him when he couldn’t control it was a horrifying thought.

“I still stand by what I said, Hannibal,” Will managed to get out. “I would rather we stopped.”

Hannibal fell silent. Suddenly, he leapt onto Will’s chest, grasping firmly at his shirt. Will gasped and took a step back. It took all of his power not push the fae away as he climbed up so they were face to face, so Will couldn’t avoid eye contact.

“Very well, Will.” Hannibal said at length. He ran a clawed hand down Will’s cheek, and Will fought the spike of fear it brought. Hannibal’s mouth twitched into a frown before his usual mask was back. “I’ll let the topic rest for tonight. I’ll stay in my room, but if you need me you only need to come to my room.”

Will internally groaned when he heard Hannibal say “tonight”. He didn’t want this to be a reoccurring argument every night. The fae jumped down and walked into his room. He looked up at Will before nodding. “Have a good night, William. Pleasant dreams.”

Will closed the door and went to his own room. As he laid down and drew the covers to his chin, he knew he would have anything but good dreams.

Will woke with a choked gasp, his face wet with tears. Images of blood and Hobbs’ mangled corpse flashed as he stubbornly rubbed his face. He cupped his hands around his eyes, forming a blinder as he stared down at his drawn knees. He just had to keep his breathing under control and keep his thoughts away from his dream. However, his usual tricks weren’t working. Just like the night with Abigail, Will could feel his panic clawing its way up his throat. He shook his head, fighting off the images, and jumped out of bed. His mind was too distraught to think clearly. He wasn’t paying attention before he caught up with what his body was doing, and he found himself in front of Hannibal’s door.

Will’s hand hovered over the doorknob. He had yet to set foot in Hannibal’s room since the attack. He didn’t know what to expect if he went it. Would Hobbs’ body still be in there? Would it just be a pile of bones? No rotten smells emitted through the door when he opened it, so Hannibal must have done something to the body, but Will didn’t want to know. He wanted to sleep in peace, but he also didn’t want to prove Hannibal right.

Shivering in the hallway, Will made to grab the handle, but he backed out. He was almost in his room when he heard the sound of a door opening behind him. Turning, he found Hannibal’s room wide open. He hesitated, but the overwhelming need for comfort took hold of him, and before he knew it his body had made the decision for him. With light steps, Will found himself in the fae’s room.

There wasn’t a corpse on the floor. There weren’t blood stains on the walls. The room was as pristine and neat as he had left it. Will’s eyes took one final swoop around the floors before he realized the door had shut behind him, sending him into darkness.

A cry slipped from his mouth when something touched his shoulder, but small, deceptively soothing claws ran along his face.

“Shh, shh, William. It’s only me.” Hannibal soothed. Will tried to shake him off, but Hannibal merely switched shoulders, teeth nipping gently at his ears. “None of that now, Will. You need to calm down. You’re shaking.”

Will couldn’t tell if his shaking was because of his nightmare still fresh in his mind, or if it was from the cold. Will just wanted to curl up and sleep. Suddenly, he remembered that the couch was no longer in the room. It was now downstairs.

Hannibal hushed Will again when the man’s breathing sped back up, moving from shoulder to shoulder to try and sooth. When it wasn’t working, Hannibal gave a small sigh. Will was nearing a panic attack when he felt something click in his brain. He only had a few seconds to be surprised before the click became heavy and clouded his mind, blanketing all of his emotions.

Will nearly collapsed as the weight settled in his head. He was kept upright by whatever power Hannibal used to keep him immobile. He was frozen in place, forced into a docile state as the fae continued to comb his claws through his hair.

“Shh, shh. Much better, pet. See? Everything is fine.” Hannibal said as he gave one final nip to his ears. “Now, listen to me carefully, Will. You are going back to your room, you are going to climb back into bed, and I will be with you the entire time. Do I make myself clear?”

A whimper wanted to bubble past Will’s lips, but the calm weight Hannibal had cast over his mind and body kept it trapped in his throat. Instead, Will managed to nod, and he felt himself be moved from one room to another. He didn’t have full use of his body until he was tucked into bed. Hannibal had taken his place on Will’s pillow in order to pet his hair. The whimper finally came out as Will curled under the covers, but there was little he could do. Hannibal began to hum softly, and slowly Will’s shivering stopped.

Will didn’t know how much time passed. He was exhausted, but his mind was in a whirl. Jumping from Hobbs to Hannibal to what the fae fed on, Will’s fear began to slowly creep upon him. Hannibal sighed.

“Why are you so scared?” the fae asked, his hands stilling. “That man is no longer alive to harm you or your sister. He is in the past, so why is your fear getting worse?”

Will didn’t answer.

“Oh,” Hannibal said after a while, his voice growing cold. “You aren’t scared of him, you’re scared of me.”

Will jumped as Hannibal’s claws began to dig into his scalp, not hard enough to hurt, but enough to make them known.

“Have I not proven I do not wish to hurt you? I had the opportunity to end you many times and yet I did not. Does that tell you nothing?”

Will still didn’t answer. Finally, he said in a small voice, “I don’t want…”

“You don’t want what, Will?” Hannibal asked. His hands resuming their petting, but his voice remained cold.

“I… Don’t want you to feed off my fears.” Will finally said. Hannibal stopped. “I don’t like that, Hannibal. I don’t know how you are keeping the dreams away, but if you have to feed off them in order to do so then I would rather have nightmares.”

“Is that all?” the fae asked, and it was Will’s turn to pause. “If that’s the case, then by letting me keep the dreams away you are preventing me from feeding off your fears. I’m not a dream eater, Will, that’s a baku’s job.”

Before Will could ask what was a baku, Hannibal continued, “I must admit, and do not take this the wrong way, William, but your fears are unappealing. They are too sour, too salty. Perfect fear should be the right mix of sorrow, a pinch of salt, and a little of bitterness. In short: your fears are one of the worst I’ve had the pleasure of tasting.”

Will was a little put off by this fact, but Hannibal shook his head. “No, I’d rather get my power from you in another way.”

“What way is that?” Will asked, genuinely curious.

Hannibal had a faint smile on his face, but he didn’t say.

“Now, I’ll ask this once more: can I sleep with you tonight, William?”

Will stared up at Hannibal, the fae’s face too close to his own. Tiny claws ran over his eyebrows, lulling his eyes to half close.

“…Yes.” Will finally said, regretting his decision as the smile grew on the fae’s face.

“Excellent.”

Will felt the weight on his mind settle further and his eyes fell shut. He was unable to open them again, but he was too exhausted to care too much. A fleeting thought passed by before he could succumb to sleep.

“What happens after this month is over, Hannibal?” Will whispered. “What happens if no one comes for you to feed off of.”

Hannibal stopped before he resumed his touches. “That won’t happen, Will. We’ll worry about that when the time comes.”

It wasn’t reassuring, and Will wanted to argue, but he was just too tired. Hannibal’s small touches faded into nothing as he fell into the darkness.

When he woke that morning, Will felt well rested, his body and mind ready to go for the start of the day. He also found Hannibal curled in his arms, the fae's face burrowed in his neck. It only took a second thought to pull the deadly creature closer and fall back to sleep.

Once the nightmares stopped, Will began to believe everything was going to be okay. Hannibal was still a worrying matter, especially with the end of the month creeping up on them, but Will pushed it from his mind. The marina proved to be a great distraction during the day, and at night he would keep himself busy with his car or putting the finishing touches on the house. More often than not he was working on the car, the engine often failing. He didn't mind, though.

Hannibal would join Will while he fixed his car. He often hovered on the open tool box, mindful so his clothes wouldn't get grease on them. The fae watched with an expression Will could only describe as 'bored fascination', his red eyes trained on Will's hands. This was usually done in silence, but occasionally Hannibal would ask questions.

"What does that do?" Hannibal pointed.

"That's the serpentine belt," Will answered as he worked. "It transfers power to other parts of the engine, so the car can work."

"So a car must have this in order to work?" Hannibal inquired, his head tilted to the side.

"Yes, without it no one's going to be going anywhere anytime soon," Will paused to wipe his face with a rag. "Haven't you seen a car before?"

"I have, but they were just being invented when I was imprisoned. Besides, I was just a doll to the previous humans."

Will didn't comment. He didn't want to think about the people before him, and how he was the only lucky one not to be killed. The fae fell silent, his face masked in "doll mode" as Will called it. Will waited before returning to work. He didn't want to know what Hannibal was thinking. He returned to work, and when he finished for the evening, Hannibal was gone.

It was Sunday evening. Will was driving back home from the marina when he spotted a car in the ditch. Wispy clouds of smoke blew away in the wind as the owner popped the hood, his face drawn with frustration. Will should have kept driving. It wasn't his business. But he pulled over anyway and came to look at the problem.

"She's just overheated," Will said after a quick examination. "A cool down would do her some good, but you might need to take her in to make sure there aren't other problems."

"Thanks," the man said. He looked at his watch before cursing. "Do you know if there are any car repair shops open at this time?"

Will shook his head. The town was big enough to have a strip mall and a couple hotels, but small enough for everything to close at five in the evening on a Sunday. The man cursed

again.

“Any chances you could give me a lift? I live in the next town over.”

Will hesitated.

“It’s only a twenty minute drive, maybe fifteen if you go over the speed limit.” The man persuaded. Will sighed and gave in.

“Yeah, sure, but I have to stop at my house. I have groceries in the car.”

The man agreed and soon the two found themselves at the Doll House. Will grabbed his groceries, the man offering to help. Will suspected it wasn’t to be a good Samaritan and to hurry the process of getting on the road.

Will was packing the last of the cold items when he heard the man laugh. Will looked up, but the man wasn’t in the kitchen anymore. Unease began to trickle into his chest as he entered the living room. The man was standing there looking at his bookshelf. Will couldn’t see what was so funny until the man turned, and in his hand was Hannibal. Will froze.

“Why do you have this?” the man asked, bending and unbending Hannibal’s limbs. The jerkiness and callous touches put Will on edge. He didn’t like the man touching Hannibal. “Pretty weird for a man to own a doll.”

“He’s a Japanese ball-jointed doll,” Will said automatically, moving over to the man’s side to take Hannibal away from him. The man didn’t let go. “They’re not toys.”

“All dolls are toys. Girl toys.” The man added, holding Hannibal a little too tightly for Will’s liking. Even knowing Hannibal was alive, Will didn’t like how the man treated another person’s items. It was rude.

Will managed to wrangle Hannibal out of the man’s hands and cradled him in one arm. “Ball-jointed dolls can be used in play, but they aren’t recommended for children. They can reach up to about one hundred or two hundred dollars, not counting the accessories that go with them. That, and they have small pieces that can be choking hazards.”

The man snickered as he watched Will put Hannibal back on the bookshelf. Will smoothed down the doll’s hair and clothing, trying to make it neat again.

“It’s still a girl’s toy,” the man said. “What are you, a fag?”

Will winced, but continued to ensure Hannibal was all right.

“No, I just appreciate fine things.”

The man said something else, but Will didn’t hear it. He was too stunned when Hannibal reached up and stopped his attempts. The fae looked him dead in the eye, his own red orbs glinting maliciously in the light. Will swallowed before gently breaking from Hannibal’s tiny grip.

“Are you done putting your groceries away?” the man asked.

Will was still looking at Hannibal when he shook his head. “No, not yet. I still have one more bag to go. Can you help me?”

The man agreed and Will led him away from the kitchen. He took one last peek, and Hannibal was gone.

When the last bag was done, the man and Will headed to the car. Will made sure Winston had food and water before climbing into the driver’s seat and turned the key.

Nothing happened.

Both Will and the man looked at each other before hoping out of the car. Will popped the hood and saw the problem immediately.

“What’s wrong with your car? It was working just fine a second ago.” The man asked, his arms crossed over his chest. Will stared down at where the serpentine belt should have been before shaking his head.

“I have no idea, but I need to grab my flood lamp if I’m going to see what’s wrong.” Will sighed, running his hands through his hair. “Come on, I might need help getting it down.”

“Pfft, some man you are if you need help carrying down a lamp.”

Says the man who can’t tell the obvious problems with a car, Will thought as he lead the man to the living room. The man didn’t even notice the doll missing from the bookshelf. Will went upstairs and into the ornate room, and there was Hannibal sitting on his chair. The man noticed.

“Wait, how did the doll get up here? You put him on the shelf.”

Will didn’t say anything. He backed out of the room, shutting the door behind him. He ran down the stairs, hands flying over his ears as the surprised and outraged yells turned into pained and horrified screams. He continued to run as he fled from the house, Winston trailing after him, and headed into the woods.

The house was quiet when Will returned hours later, but there was a stillness about it. He stared at the house, shaking hands petting over Winston’s head as he worked up the courage to enter.

Hannibal was waiting for him in the kitchen when he finally walked through the front door. He wore a smug smile as he lounged on his shelf, his hair loose and in his face. Will noted the new outfit and frowned.

“Clothes are expensive, you know. Why couldn’t you be careful or take the clothes off before you devoured him?”

Hannibal ignored his outburst, his smile growing wider.

“And I’m not doing this again. You hear me, Hannibal?”

Hannibal chuckled and finally looked down at Will, his eyes gleaming.

“Of course, William. It won’t happen again.”

But it did happen again. The third time it was a traveling salesman who couldn’t take no for an answer, and the fourth was a man who was foolish enough to break into the Doll House. Will tried hard to keep the salesman away, knowing he would become Hannibal’s next meal. He couldn’t do anything for the burglar who had pulled a knife on him. Hannibal didn’t take kindly to either men, and they both found themselves locked behind the ornate room. Each time Will took solace in the woods with Winston, burying his face in the dog’s fur.

Will felt guilt over the deaths of the men, but a deeper part of him, a dark part was thrilled, joyful at the deaths. Hannibal was killing them not only because they were prey, but because they were a threat to Will. A part of him was excited that something so malicious, so calculating cared for him.

After each killing, Hannibal would coax Will upstairs, past the ornate door and into the bathroom where they would both shower before bed. Hannibal would curl around Will’s head and lull him to sleep, guarding him from the bad dreams. Since their arrangement, Will had yet to have a single nightmare, nor had he begun to sleep walk. It was the third death he realized he was starting to depend on Hannibal, and it was the fifth Will discovered he could never leave the fae’s side.

Chapter End Notes

Just one more chapter to go
I fear the characters are out of character in this chapter. I don't know why, but I just feel like I made Will too much of a wimp in this D: poor baby.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“What happens at the end of the second year?” Will asked. They were curled up on the couch: Hannibal on Will’s shoulder and Winston at Will’s feet. It was a routine the three fell into as the months passed. Will grew to enjoy Hannibal's company once more, and since the “doll” could talk back he was a little less lonely. When he wasn't working, Will's days and nights were consumed by the fae. Hannibal barely left Will's side and made his shoulder his favorite spot to perch on.

Their relationship, if Will could call it that, revolved around companionship and death. Hannibal helped drive the nightmares and loneliness away, and Will helped lure victims, even if he didn't mean to. It was symbiotic, but Will was beginning to see multiple downsides. Sooner or later, someone was going to come by looking for one of the victims. No matter how well Hannibal hid the evidence of the prey ever being there, Will knew it was only a matter of time. Will also knew, for as much as Hannibal depended on him to get him fresh bodies, Will depended on him to keep him sane. Without the fae, Will knew his night terrors would come back. Hannibal was the sleeping aid, and Will was addicted.

“Will you stay at the Doll House, or will you return to where you came from?”

Hannibal was silent. The fae’s eyes were closed, but Will knew he was awake. After a time, the fae took a breath.

“There is nothing to return to,” Hannibal replied softly.

“You don’t have a family?” Will asked.

“No.” Hannibal finally answered, and Will knew he wouldn’t get anymore information on the subject. “As for the end of the two years, I haven’t decided where I’m going to go. I know I don’t want to stay here.”

Will nodded in agreement, but he couldn’t stop the pang of sorrow that hit him. That was it? No more Hannibal? What was he going to do after the fae left?

Will could stay, but the memories would haunt him, the guilt of what he complied in would drive him mad. No, he would leave, too, he decided. There would be no point in staying. He only came here because of the curse, and since Hannibal refused to kill him and Will’s addiction prevented him from leaving, he had no other choice other than to enjoy the time with Hannibal as long as he could. He wondered if his depression would come back, or if his nightmares would drive him to silence them once and for all.

Hannibal nipped at Will’s ear, and Will laughed quietly.

“Why do you keep doing that?” he asked, bringing a hand up to gently pet Hannibal. The fae leaned into the touch, biting at his fingers. He didn’t respond, and Will was okay with that.

Will sat on his bed as he waited for Hannibal, his thoughts still circling around their earlier conversation. He knew, as much as the fae reassured him, that he was only being used because he could bring prey to the house. Hannibal promised he wouldn't hurt him, that he didn't like the taste of his fear. But Will knew, as soon as the two years were up and Hannibal fed every month, the fae would be gone.

The dark part of Will that was growing every day whispered to him every so often. Why help Hannibal? Lengthen the time by denying the fae food for one month. Leave and return with the fear and terror of an unworthy human as an apology.

Will shook his head. No, that wouldn't work. Even with the promises, if he did that to Hannibal, the fae would kill him for sure. No, best to stay on his good side for as long as possible. He didn't want to be on the wrong side of those claws.

“What are you thinking about?” Hannibal's voice broke through his thoughts. Will met his gaze from where he sat on the night stand.

“It's nothing,” Will said. He laid down and turned off the lamp, knowing Hannibal didn't need it to see. He waited for the now familiar motions of Hannibal walking across his pillow to take his position at his head. Will nearly groaned in contentment as the deadly claws ran over his forehead, his eyes drooping.

“It doesn't taste like nothing, Will.” Hannibal said, and Will mentally cursed. Of course Hannibal could tell something was wrong. He could taste the fear that rolled off of Will, but it wasn't his usual taste. It was more sorrowful, something he had tasted before. Abandonment.

Hannibal stood, and Will's eyes, which had fallen shut, snapped open. He made out Hannibal's form from the moonlight, but otherwise he couldn't see. The fae stood on his collarbone and braced his hands on Will's cheeks.

“Hannibal, what are you--”

The fae placed a kiss to Will's lips.

Will froze. His eyes widened. What was Hannibal doing? And why didn't he feel sick at the idea of a man eater kissing him.

Will had been kissed on the lips before, but they weren't like this. For starters, Hannibal's kiss only touched his top lip. It was chaste, something he wasn't expecting at all. There were no teeth, no claws, no blood. Just a small little kiss.

Hannibal pulled away, and Will could see the smile on the fae's face even in the dark. Will could feel his face heating up.

“I care for you very much, Will.” Hannibal said softly, and Will's ears turned pink, causing the grin to widen.

“I wonder,” the fae began, running a claw down Will's chin. “How far I can get your blush to spread.”

As he said this, his claws ran down the man's throat, traveling over his Adam’s apple and catching the hem of his shirt. Will's breathing hitched as his shirt ripped as Hannibal continued down. Hannibal stopped when only half of the shirt was ripped and pulled it a part as far as he could. He knelt on the soft skin of Will's chest, claws pressing hard enough to make the man hiss as they drew down. A gasp escaped as one clawed hand ran dangerously close to his nipple.

“You once asked me why I bite you, nibble at you.” Hannibal leaned forward and caught the flesh of Will's left pectoral between his jaws. Will's breath hitched. “My kind does not show affection the same way humans do. We do not kiss. It is something we picked up by watching humans. Instead, we bite,”

He bit the other pectoral, and Will gasped.

“we scratch,”

He took one clawed finger and ran it around Will's right nipple.

“and we devour.”

Will cried out as Hannibal latched onto the bud with his teeth, feeling a wetness run down his chest. He bit his lip as the fae drank his blood, following the streams back to the source. The same treatment was given to the other side, and Will was soon writhing in his bed, unable to decide if he enjoyed the pleasure laced with pain.

Hannibal bit his way up his chest, leaving bite marks and blood in his wake before making his way back to his lips. In the darkness, Will could see Hannibal's face and clothes drenched in blood, and he whined.

“Clothes are expensive, Hannibal.” he complained, and the fae laughed. Hannibal swooped in and gave his pet a bloody kiss.

The fishing rod whirled as Will made his cast, the sun shining hot and bright without a cloud in the sky. These were the days Will liked the most. Just him and the outdoors. He left Winston at home since he was only going to be fishing for a short while. Plus, he wanted to catch some fish. Winston had a tendency to jump into the water, chasing the fish away. It would only end in tragedy for both owner and dog. Will, having caught no fish, and Winston, who would need to get a bath. Leaving him at home was the best option.

Will quietly hummed to himself as he set his rod between his feet. He had already caught two fish and was hoping to catch a third before the day was done. He wasn’t in a hurry. He was

pleasantly warm in the shade, enjoying the breeze as it blew against his face and pulled at his hair.

Granted, that wasn't just from the wind.

Opening his eyes, Will chuckled before raising his hand to his head, and he received a small nip on his fingers in response.

"How do you feel, Hannibal?" he asked as he allowed himself to be chewed upon. "Do you need to go back?"

Hannibal was silent for a moment, giving Will's pinky the barest of licks before responding. "I am well, at the moment, but perhaps we should turn in soon. I can feel the binds beginning to tighten."

Both Will and Hannibal learned by the fourth month Hannibal was strong enough to leave the house for short periods of time on his own before he was compelled to return. It was an awful feeling, the fae once told him.

"One time, one of the previous owners decided to bury me in the woods. The need to return was so great I nearly clawed myself out of the pit before the human returned for me. Apparently the compelling works both ways."

Since Hannibal was feeding once a month, his powers were growing as well. First, he could only be outside for a couple of minutes. Then, as the weeks dragged on into the fifth and sixth months Hannibal could accompany Will to his fishing excursions. Will worried his fishing was boring, but the fae reassured him.

"I've been locked in that house with only windows as a source to the outside world. This is more than okay."

Will had to give him that, so any time they could Will took the fae with him on any outside adventures.

Will sighed and Hannibal settled on his shoulder, and the two of them fell into a comfortable peace that was only broken by the tugging of the fishing line.

Reeling in the last fish of the day, Will didn't notice Hannibal growing still. He didn't see how the fae's head snapped in one direction, his nose scenting the air. He did notice the familiar weight leaving his shoulder.

"Hannibal?" Will looked around, but the fae was gone.

"Hannibal?" Will called out again, but there was no response. It was strange. The fae usually let Will know when he was going back to the house. It was only polite.

Shrugging it off, Will put the fish in his cooler and collected his things before heading back home.

He looked around for Hannibal, but still didn't see him. He followed the worn path, enjoying the silence when he noticed something. There was an unfamiliar sound. It wasn't the usual birds or other wildlife. It sounded like footsteps.

Reaching the curve in the path, Will saw a woman with curly red hair ahead of him. With her ridiculous outfits and high heels, Will knew she wasn't a hiker lost in the woods. She was searching for something, and Will had a sneaking suspicion he knew what it was. Still, it would be rude to ignore her. She seemed like she could use the help.

Calling out to her, Will asked, “Ma'am, are you lost?”

The woman turned, and as they talked, red eyes watched from the forest.

Chapter End Notes

You didn't think this was the end, did you? We still have one more part to go.

The final installment of "The Living Doll" will be found in "The Cursed Doll". Eveyone's been asking how the story will end. Well, let's just say you get to pick the ending of your choice.

End Notes

Thank-you everyone who has commented, bookmarked, or gave kudos. I appreciate and look forward to what you have to say.

indestructibleannajay.tumblr.com

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!